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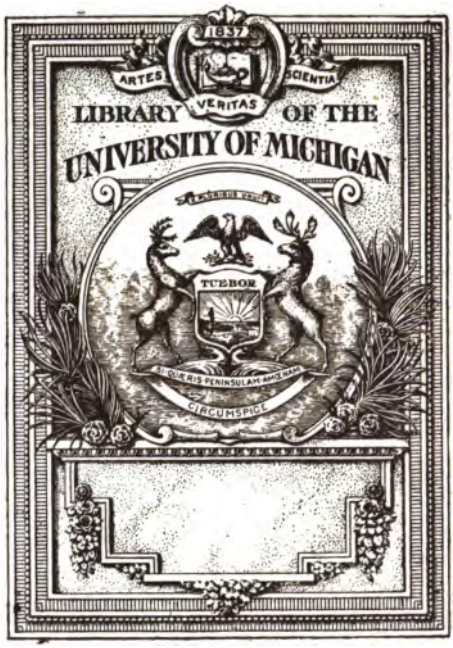
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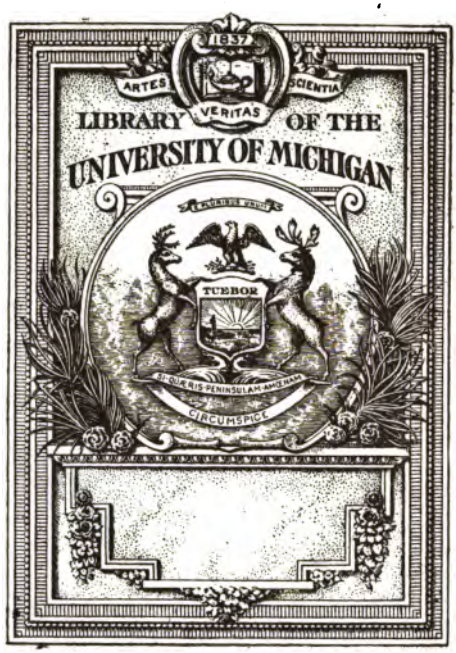

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UNION LABOR IN PEACE AND WAR

WALTER V. WOEHLKE

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FOREWORD

THE next time you ride home on the car between five-thirty and six, look at the man with the dinner pail across the aisle. His finger nails are not manicured; there are no kid gloves on his hands, his clothing is stained with black oil spots and the odor of perspiration betrays the lack of a shower bath. The young person with the imitation seal scarf and the salary of nine a week tries to avoid contact with him, but aside from her penciled and lifted brow he attracts no special attention.

Why should he? His nose, even though it has a black smudge that was not removed by the hasty ablution, is in the middle of his face. He breathes, moves his hands, feet and jaw just like other people, reads his paper, discusses prohibition, the movies, baseball and politics just like you and I. He is made of the same clay, has the same skin, the same elemental hopes, joys, fears, the same bald spot and the same kind of corns as the rest of us. Change his clothes, put him into the hands of a competent barber, and in half an hour you could not tell him apart in a group of our leading citizens.

Yet the man with the dinner pail is a Problem, the biggest problem before us. Multiply him a few million times and he becomes Labor. His stature grows into the sky, his rather commonplace face changes expression, assumes a threatening mien, his relaxed hands contract into gigantic iron fists. As a plain person riding home in a crowded street car between a shop girl and hardware clerk the man with the dinner pail asks for and receives no special treatment; he pays his nickel, takes his transfer, gives up his seat to the woman with the baby and hangs by the strap like any other citizen. But when he becomes a Problem, when he drops his individual capacity and turns into Labor, especially Organized Labor, he loses the aspect of an ordinary citizen.

The change that takes place is analogous to the transformation of the civilian into the soldier. As member of a military force the individual exercises rights and privileges which, performed by a private citizen, would promptly get him into jail. When he dons the uniform and takes the oath, the soldier's status is completely changed. He is removed from the control of the civil authorities; his doings are judged by a special code; his freedom of action is limited; his standard of conduct is radically altered.

A somewhat similar change takes place when the individual ceases to be just a plain worker and, by a process of agglutination, turns into Organized Labor. As a component part of Organized Labor, he claims rights and privileges which he would not

dream of receiving as a common, garden-variety citizen. If he eats dinner in a restaurant, finds hair in the soup, his steak tough, his coffee bitter and the bill high he does not rush out, print handbills, paint signs and hire men to keep people from patronizing the place; if he, in his private capacity as an unadorned citizen, has a quarrel with his grocer or butcher because they will not knock five dollars off the monthly bill, he does not endeavor to induce all the patrons of the tradesmen to take their custom elsewhere, nor does he publish lists of the offending merchants in his paper. But as a member of Organized Labor he considers the boycott his own peculiar privilege, fights vociferously against its surrender and complains loudly when it is turned against him.

The merchant who sees his livelihood and his capital take wings because his competitor undersells him, never dreams of hiring pickets to patrol the sidewalk in front of his rival's store, yet Organized Labor claims this extraordinary privilege. Our friend across the aisle would never think of waylaying his neighbor who pays five dollars a month less rent for similar accommodations; it does not occur to him to break his neighbor's ribs, his landlord's head or to burn the offending premises. Such acts would constitute a common black crime like burglary or embezzlement. But when these identical acts are committed in the cause of Organized Labor, their character suddenly changes, they become chameleons, turn pure white and, in the opinion of our friend, are wholly justifiable and a righteous punishment for the wicked.

Of course there is a reason for the colored glasses our friend with the dinner pail wears in his collective capacity, glasses that give him a distorted picture of his relations to his fellowmen. That reason is the balance of power. Just as Belgium was given a certain extraordinary status in the family of nations, a status based upon the country's inability to protect itself against its powerful neighbors, so Labor has been given by common consent a privileged position. Because Labor was weak, because the industrial revolution brought about through the introduction of power-driven machinery left the individual worker helpless in the hand of the employer, society intervened, placed an increasing number of restrictions upon the employer's liberty of action and at the same time released Labor from the necessity of obeying certain statutes which continued to be in force as against all other elements of the population. To put it tersely, society in its own interest shackled the employer with numerous special laws while at the same time it untied the hands of Labor.

Right at this point let us remark that, had society failed to act on behalf of Labor as it did, anarchy, chaos, turmoil and bloody

strife would have been the result. The special position was accorded Labor not because the individual workman was intrinsically better entitled to it than the rest of humanity, but because the bitter necessities of the moment made the action imperative and inevitable if society was to continue to exist.

But society, in extending a helping hand to Labor, in extending extraordinary rights and privileges to one element, overlooked something. It forgot to state that, in return for the extraordinary privileges, Labor should and must balance the account by assuming certain duties. The bargain was one-sided. Labor took and took, but Labor gave nothing in return for the protection it received. Labor gradually arrived at a state of mind in which it believed that it—Labor, especially Organized Labor—actually *was* society, that no other element counted, that the collective manual workers had a God-given right to further their group interest in any way they pleased, regardless of the welfare of society as a whole.

The best example of the result of this mental attitude is supplied by recent events in Russia.

In Russia the man who works with his hands, carrying the policy of Organized Labor everywhere to its logical conclusion, has proclaimed himself dictator. In Russia the reddist dream of the reddest radical has become reality. For a year the workers have had exclusive control not only of the political government and of the army, but of all industrial processes as well. And all the world knows by this time the results of pure and unadulterated working class control. The theoretical paradise of Karl Marx, Proudhomme and Kropotkin in actual practice turned out to be a sample of red-hot hell.

What will happen in the rest of Europe and in America when the war ceases, when the external pressure is relieved, when the temperature goes down and thirty million men suddenly are thrown back upon their own resources?

Thirty million men and their dependents, equivalent to the total population of the United States, are now being fed, clothed and housed by the belligerent governments. Who can imagine the tremendous upheaval resulting from the sudden unemployment of almost the entire working population of the United States? England by no means has the largest army, yet England is planning to distribute the process of demobilization over twelve months at least in order to forestall chaos and misery. The problem of merely getting the boys out of the trenches and back to the benches is daily assuming larger proportions.

And what will Labor do once the fighting is over?

In every belligerent nation the gigantic pressure of war has speeded up the machines, smashed union shop rules, pushed

aside all limitations on output. In every belligerent country female and unskilled labor in wholesale quantities has displaced the skilled mechanic. And in every belligerent country scarcity of men has lifted wages to heights unknown before the war.

Perhaps the well paid woman worker, perhaps the newly trained, highly paid laborer will gladly step aside, hand the returning soldier-mechanic his old job without a struggle; it is possible that the returning veterans, glad to escape the danger and misery of the trenches, will not object strongly to the new régime of higher speed and longer hours. No trouble may arise out of these conditions, but the fixed peculiarities of human nature are bound to make a great deal of trouble the moment a wholesale reduction of the high war wages is attempted. Yet such a reduction must come. International competition, now non-existent, and unprecedented taxation will compel it.

When it comes, what will Labor do?

Nobody knows, least of all Labor itself. Yet the problem of Labor after the war is everywhere receiving deep and anxious thought. Labor has learned to handle dynamite, to eat, sleep, kill and die with it; Labor now knows the feel of its military as well as its economic power. After the war there may—or there may not—be a series of great internal disturbances similar to the Russian upheaval in every belligerent country.

For years to come the Labor problem will be the biggest, the most important question confronting the United States.

To contribute its mite towards the solution of this problem, the author undertakes in this volume to analyze and define the status of both union and unorganized workers on the Pacific Coast. For a study of this subject the Pacific Coast provides an extraordinary wealth of material. It was on the Pacific Coast that the trade unions won their first political victories in the United States; on the Pacific Slope are the only communities in which the craft unions had or have complete control over the machinery of government; on the Pacific Coast the closed-shop doctrine has won its most thoroughgoing victories, and on the Pacific Coast this doctrine has suffered its bitterest defeat. Though the highest wages in the world are paid in the Far West, it has been the scene of perhaps the bloodiest labor struggles in the country, and the problem of the drifting, itinerant worker here is more acute than in the rest of the country.

If this little book succeeds in widening the reader's horizon, if it gives him a clearer, sharper picture of the facts underlying the Labor situation, if it helps him to formulate his own judgment as to the merits of the great controversy, if it should advance the problem by one inch on the road to ultimate solution, its aims and objects will have been fulfilled.

CHAPTER I

WHY THE PACIFIC COAST BECAME THE UNION PARADISE

In September, 1916, four labor organizations with a membership less than the population of one Congressional district cracked the whip, lifted the hoop and began counting:

"One, two, thr—"

Before the count was finished, Congress leaped through the hoop.

It was an historical moment when, in obedience to an ultimatum with a time limit attached, the representatives of one hundred million people hastened to pass a law raising the wages of two hundred thousand men, already the highest paid group of workers in the world, without investigation or deliberation, threats speeding up the legislative machinery as no bonus ever speeded lathe or punch.

When I read of the panicky fear that wrung a chorus of reluctant ayes out of Congress the picture of a brakeman came back to me. He was sitting in the shade of a date palm down in the Colorado Desert, pulling on his pipe and resting while waiting for Number Nine to pass.

"Ran her up to a hundred and forty-seven bucks last month," he volunteered by-and-by. "'Tain't so worse, I say. Helluvalot better 'n stacking alfalfa all day for two 'n a quarter. Me quit railroadin'? What for? Best I ever did on the outside was eighty a month, an' I'd be lucky to get that if I'd quit braking now."

There are millions of men with better education, with superior skill, men equally intelligent, equally willing and ambitious whose pay envelopes will never reach the opulence of the brakeman's check. What magic elixir lifted the earnings of this man from eighty on the outside to an average of a hundred and thirty on the inside of the railroad?

Organization; collective bargaining; labor monopoly; the trade union.

Organizations of workingmen reach far back into antiquity. It is recorded that the union of image-makers in ancient Rome strenuously opposed the introduction of Christianity because the spread of the new religion restricted the market of the artisan's product. When the feudal system went to pieces, the craft guilds arose and flourished even in America, where the "shoomakers of Boston" organized the first guild in 1648, its charter significantly denying this organization the power of "inhancing

the prices of shooes, bootes or wages." In these craft guilds the journeyman owned the meager, inexpensive tools of his trade and, through skill, industry, thrift or the employer's daughter it was easy for him to climb into the masters' ranks. The modern trade union did not come into being until the steam engine was hitched to gigantic machines and made the craftsman's hand tools worthless.

It is difficult in the twentieth century to realize the full extent of the upheaval brought about through the introduction of machine production in a handicraft age. The entire industrial world was thrown out of joint. Flourishing manufacturers by the score went to the wall because an upstart in the business with the aid of steam and a new machine was suddenly able to produce the goods at one-third of the cost. Wages of hand work were slashed to the bone to meet the machine competition. And the multiplication of the power-driven machines brought about unbridled competition among the owners of the increasing factories, forcing them to cut wages, to increase hours, to employ women and children in order to survive. Unrestricted, unregulated competition among both workers and employers, a condition which, strange to say, seemed ideal to many Americans a little while ago, brought about one of the blackest periods in modern history.

In Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Lancashire the English weavers were actually starving a century ago. The power-driven spinning frame had robbed thousands of the hand workers of their livelihood and the business depression caused by the Napoleonic wars had shut down mill after mill. Blaming the new machinery for their distress, the workers went around and smashed the hated frames; nor did the destruction cease until more than a score of the rioters, under the provisions of a special law, had been hung by their scrawny necks, until they were dead.

In this dark period of unorganized chaos men and women often worked sixteen hours out of the twenty-four; children four and five years old were forced to labor ten hours a day and longer. And this condition was not confined to the Old World. The Boston workmen in 1835 struck against the labor period stretching from dawn until dawn. In New England seventy years ago women and children worked thirteen to fourteen hours a day, lived in hovels owned by the company, ate the food sold in company stores or boarding houses and even went to church in edifices company-owned.

In these days when Congress humbly carries out the mandate of labor leaders it is even more difficult to imagine a period in which the laborer could not move out of his district without official permission, in which all political power was reserved

exclusively for the privileged classes. The English artisans did not obtain the ballot until 1867. In Germany universal manhood suffrage came into being in 1871, but the English agricultural laborer had to wait fourteen years longer—till 1885—before he was admitted into the voting booth. Lest we militant democrats preen ourselves too arrogantly, it should be added that the workman in America did not begin to vote in the Northern states until 1830. Before that time he was in the same position officially and legally that the negro laborer of the South occupies unofficially today.

Verily, labor has climbed to the top of the heap with giant's strides in the last eighty years!

The Sherman Anti-Trust law is still in full force and effect; the common law provision against conspiracies in restraint of trade, dating from the time of Edward I, is still binding upon industry and trade, but labor has been expressly relieved from the necessity of observing either. In the discussion of labor's position, of labor's demands and methods, it is important to remember these exemptions, to realize that society has the right to demand a return for the extraordinary privileges it has bestowed upon labor organizations.

In the United States the growth and development of labor unions has been continuous for more than a hundred years, but this development differed in many important features from similar movements in Europe and Australia. Perhaps the principal distinguishing feature of the American movement is the tendency to create an "aristocracy of labor," to widen the gulf between the mass of unskilled and unorganized workers on the one hand and the comparatively small number of skilled and thoroughly organized mechanics on the other hand. The best example of this internal class division is provided by the railroad workers. The skilled and organized train men enjoy a compensation ranging from $100 to $250 a month while the section "hands" have to be satisfied with pay ranging from $40 to $60. The unionized bricklayer of the United States earns $6 in eight hours; the laborer who mixes the bricklayer's mortar worked nine hours and earned only two dollars. No such class stratification within the ranks of labor has taken place in Europe. The English bricklayer and the building laborer work the same number of hours and their compensation is not very far apart; if the bricklayer's wage is, say, thirty cents an hour, the laborer's will be fifteen cents or perhaps even a little more.

Immigration has been the cause of this growth of a class within a class. The newest race of immigrants was ever willing to perform the hardest tasks for the lowest pay. They "scabbed" on the earlier arrivals. Men from northern Europe underbid the

native worker until they were Americanized. Slavs underbid the Germans, the Irish and the Scandinavians. The Slavs, in turn, found the Jews elbowing their way into their jobs, and now the Jew, in the clothing trade for instance, is yielding before the Italians.

Furthermore, there was open to the American labor leader an avenue for the improvement of his position practically unknown in Europe. Through his actual or imaginary control of large blocks of vote the American union general was—and is—constantly tempted to go into politics, to abandon the meager legitimate rewards growing out of the field of organized labor and to climb after the large, juicy plums dangling invitingly in the foliage of city, state or national politics.

For more than twenty years after the discovery of gold California had no labor "problem" in the present sense of the term. Owing to the isolation of the Pacific Coast and the resultant heavy cost of importing both goods and labor, the employer and his workers had things their own way. The country was rich, growing like a mushroom, money was abundant and competition was practically non-existent. If the workmen demanded an addition to their already high wages, the manufacturer or the contractor granted it readily and passed the cost on to his customers. For decades after the beginning of labor unions on the Pacific Coast their relations with the employers were free of the bitter antagonism that causes the two factions to glare at one another with suspicion and hatred today. Only once in a while, when the demands of the unions became exorbitant, did the employers fight to a finish.

A notable example of such an exorbitant demand is the strike in San Francisco of the bakers' union in 1863. The organized bakery workers decided that it was time for another raise. They knew that the master bakers were helpless. It would take months and cost enormous sums to import new workers by stage-coach or by way of Panama and in the meantime the city had to have bread. So they demanded an increase of $35 a month and struck. They got the money, but the master bakers gritted their teeth and stuck their heads together. Six months later a few score German bakers arrived from Hamburg. Bakery wages immediately did some fancy ground and lofty tumbling.

While the blue smoke from the campfires of the gold-seekers was still rising above the plains, unions of printers, carpenters and other trades were organized in San Francisco and Sacramento. Their demands encountered little opposition. In the early days everybody worked with his hands, everybody hoped to be rich day after tomorrow, everybody gladly recognized labor's right to good pay. When labor in 1853 demanded the ten-hour day,

the California legislature passed the law almost without opposition. As early as 1867 the building trades of San Francisco obtained the eight-hour day. The first free employment bureau anywhere in the United States was opened in San Francisco in 1868. When a new state constitution was hammered out in

Denis Kearney, first of the labor agitators on the Pacific Coast, and foe of the Chinese

1879, one-third of the builders were delegates elected by the Workingmen's Party. As soon as labor demanded the exclusion of the Chinese, the public rallied to its support. The worker's right to organize, to demand ample pay, reasonable hours and good working conditions was conceded.

So it came about that the Pacific Coast, more especially California and San Francisco, became the focal point of the American trade union movement, the locality in which organized labor reached the zenith of power, wealth and influence. But the typical employers' association of the Pacific Coast resembled a shrapnel shell; in the very act of downing its opponent it resolved itself into its original fragments and disappeared.

The Union Pacific was completed in 1869. Thousands of men employed in its building streamed into San Francisco; other thousands came from the East and with them came trainload after trainload of Eastern commodities manufactured by men receiving far less than the standard California wages. In addition the Nevada mines began to decrease their output and, when silver was demonetized, the financial structure of the Far West swayed in the furious blast. San Francisco was overrun with hordes of unemployed men, many of them hungry. But they did not lay the chief blame for their hunger, for the decreasing wages and increasing hours on the employers. They turned the vials of their wrath on the Chinese instead, listened to the first of the outstanding labor leaders, Dennis Kearney, while he denounced coolie labor on the sand lots, and their distress prompted Henry George, then in San Francisco, to seek the solution of all social ills in the abolition of private ownership of land. In their agitation against coolie labor, against land monopoly, against corruption in public life, against the domination of politics by public-service corporations, they had the sympathy and support of the public, of the majority of employers.

In the decade between 1880 and 1890 the Chinese were excluded, business conditions improved, Andrew Furuseth founded the Coast Seamen's Union that was to make him famous, and organized labor in California took hold of a new weapon, the use and abuse of which was to have far-reaching consequences.

That new weapon was the boycott. Aggravated by the sympathetic strike, it so irritated the employers, inflicted upon them so much unnecessary loss, that they combined and inflicted upon the unions a crushing defeat. The introduction of the boycott ushered in the era of violence, dynamiting, of "class consciousness" and direct action still in crimson bloom.

The boycott is a method of punishment. What is more natural than the act of a union which forbids its members to purchase the product of, say, a cigar manufacturer who will not accede to the "closed shop"? What is more natural than the act of a union which, to inflict greater loss, to bring greater pressure to bear upon a stubborn employer, asks that all other unions likewise penalize members who buy this employer's goods? And from this extension of the pressure it is an easy and logical step to appeal to

the general public for aid and sympathy, to proclaim the misdeeds of the offending employer on handbills, posters, transparencies, to post in front of his establishment pickets charged with the duty of shooing trade away from the "Unfair" house.

To Pacific Coast residents the boycott seems as natural, as inevitable and commonplace a phenomenon as freckles on a boy's nose. Most of us are so familiar with its manifestations that we no longer notice the posters, pickets and handbills. Yet I believe most of us would open our eyes very wide, would stop, look and listen intently if the retailers' association of Portland, Los Angeles, Seattle and San Francisco should throw picket lines across the entrance of Meier & Frank's department store, warn pedestrians against patronizing Bullock's or the Emporium and have sandwich men parade in front of the Bon Marché urging the public to stay out of the store because it was "unfair to the organized retailers." We did not become very indignant when the union of retail clerks during a wage controversy endeavored to bankrupt the chain of Owl drug stores along the Pacific Coast. Suppose the competitors of the Owl stores used the same tactics as the striking employees; suppose every group of merchants hurt by the lower sale prices of another group should employ pickets, handbills, posters and sandwich men in an effort to destroy the business of their competitors. The result would be incessant strife and chaos, a complete disorganization of the orderly processes of production and distribution.

In the beginning the Pacific Coast unions had used the boycott to discourage the use of Chinese-made goods by organized labor and its friends. It was the fight of California's trade unions against oriental labor that gave birth to the union label when the few remaining white cigar-makers in the sixties placed a white poster on every box of their product to distinguish it from the "yellow" output. The union label was effective. So was the boycott. So effective was the boycott that it seemed a shame not to use this weapon against neutrals to make them fall in line against the enemy. And so arose the secondary boycott, the classic example of which is to be found in the trade-union blockade of a certain Vancouver Island colliery in 1891.

The miners of this colliery, having struck for shorter hours and against the company-store graft, appealed to the Federal Trades Council in San Francisco for help. It was given willingly. The Council at once declared a boycott against the "unfair" coal and appointed a committee to see that the consumption of this fuel in California was reduced. The job was done thoroughly. Purchasers of the "unfair" coal all over California were spotted, bombarded with pleas, demands and threats. If they did not yield, if they persisted in buying the boycotted product, they in

turn were placed under the ban, loyal union men were commanded, the general public was exhorted, not to patronize the "unfair" establishment. Thus one primary boycott might, like a redwood tree with its circle of scions, surround itself with a dozen offshoots. In the case of the "unfair" British Columbia coal the striking miners settled their differences with the colliery late in the year, but the boycotts in California continued merrily for months after the original bone of contention had been buried.

Unfortunately, the boycott, like the proprietary nostrum, cured nothing. An overdose of the boycott medicine merely aggravated functional disorders. It irritated the employers, scared the merchants, produced a feeling of uneasiness throughout the commercial community. Nobody knew when and where the next boycott blow was to fall; no one felt secure in signing a contract for supplies, raw material or merchandise.

In 1891 the boycott mania aroused the employers to action. They organized the Board of Manufacturers and Employers of California, the first central association of its kind on the Pacific Coast, raised a fund and tossed their collective sombrero into the ring. The excessive use of the boycott had driven them into the trenches, a fact shown plainly in the "Manifesto on the Boycott" issued by the organization.

"The manufacturers do not complain of wages," says the Manifesto. " . . . If permitted to do business in peace the manufacturers could pay these wages and prosper. It is the element of uncertainty that kills. . . . The boycott is the crying evil of our times. . . . A boycotter is in all respects an industrial wrecker. He is a highwayman. His single and simple proposition is, 'stand and deliver.'"

The employers' association did not question the right of the workers to organize and to obtain the best possible terms through collective bargaining; neither did the association endeavor to bar union members from employment, but it did insist that the arbitrary action of the labor leaders, the declaration of the boycott on flimsy pretexts, the calling of strikes upon the slightest provocation, must be stopped. On these issues the employers went to war.

The Coast Seamen's Union, organized by Andrew Furuseth in 1885, was decisively beaten when the united employers backed the Ship Owners' Association in 1893. Hard times came to the aid of the employers. Labor was a drug on the market and its organizations went to pieces under the stress of internal competition. By 1895 only one union, the printers, maintained the union shop intact in San Francisco. All the rest had in a single onslaught lost the control over their trades they had exercised for almost fifty years. Whereupon the employers promptly allowed their organization to go to pieces.

The beginning of the prolonged irrigation boom in 1898, assisted by the acquisition of the Philippines and the gold rush to Alaska, brought good times and super-abundant employment back with a rush. Money was plentiful and circulated freely up and down the Coast and, with the red ink entries off the balance sheet, the employers did not seriously oppose either the reorganization or the granting of the unions' demands. They harbored no animosity toward organized labor. Even the Coast Seamen's Journal, owned, edited and read by labor, acknowledged that the employers were ready to share their prosperity with the workers, that they readily granted the demands and adopted the union scale and union conditions if the union controlled all the shops in a trade.

In 1899 twenty-five new unions were organized in San Francisco. In the first half of 1900 ten more were added. The headquarters of the Labor Council swarmed like a beehive on a warm May morning. Hitherto unionism had been confined to the skilled trades. Now the ambitions of the leaders soared higher. They organized everybody from bootblacks to pin setters and grave diggers. Organization and control of every worker in San Francisco, in California, in all the Far West was their aim. At first they had been satisfied with shorter hours and higher wages; now they endeavored to wrest all control over working conditions out of the hands of the employer and place it in the keeping of the "shop steward" appointed by the union.

"The one motto of all seemed to be 'Organize, demand, strike!'" This is not the statement of an employer. It was printed in the official paper of the unions, "Organized Labor," and it appeared in an editorial warning the union forces against the indiscriminate chartering of unskilled occupations, counseling moderation and preaching against the endless succession of strikes. The situation became so bad that the well established unions, scenting danger, proposed to the Labor Council a new rule prohibiting any union from calling a strike until it had been chartered and had obtained membership in the Council for at least six months. But the voices of the prophets were not heeded. The work of organizing, demanding, striking and boycotting went on undiminished in volume. A complete monopoly of all labor in San Francisco was in sight when at last the merchants became scared.

Catching the fever, the porters and packers employed in the wholesale and retail establishments formed a union. It was the last link in the chain of workers handling the goods on their way from the producer to the consumer, and this last link was right in the stores of the merchants. The stevedores and longshoremen, the freight handlers and the teamsters, were all thoroughly

organized. If the porters and packers joined them in the Waterfront Federation, a two-by-four disturbance in Seattle through the sympathetic strike might disorganize every mercantile establishment in San Francisco. And the prospect of having "shop stewards" dictate the policy of their stores frightened the merchants.

Industrial conditions in San Francisco were as harmonious and pleasant for the employers as a woolen shirt next to the skin on a hot day; strikes primary and sympathetic followed one another like bills on the first of the month; boycotts were declared with as little regard for consequences as Coal Oil Johnny had for money, yet the employers offered no serious resistance, did nothing to check the impending labor monopoly until the frightened merchants brought on the teamsters' strike in order to forestall the unionization of the porters and packers.

In July, 1901, the refusal of a few teamsters to handle "unfair" baggage gave the signal for the contest. On July 30th more than twenty thousand members of fourteen unions engaged in the handling and transportation of commodities struck. Civil war broke out as soon as the employers endeavored to have their hauling done by imported non-union men. In their headquarters the Brotherhood of Teamsters maintained a private jail where it locked up the "scabs" pulled from the wagons. Hundreds of strikebreakers were assaulted and brutally beaten; many of them were crippled by blows with an iron bar that broke their wrists. Fear reigned in the city; fear of death, bodily injury and business losses caused the executive committee of the Employers' Association in charge of the strike to keep the identity of its members a profound secret, and this secrecy born of fear in turn prevented open discussion and negotiations. Though the business of half the state was disrupted, though scores of individuals and firms were ruined, though farm crops spoiled, factories were silent and stores could not obtain goods, though Mayor Phelan and Governor Gage urged mediation, the Employers' Association declined to negotiate and the bloodshed went on.

It is now recognized that the unyielding refusal of the Employers' Association to arbitrate was a mistake, yet this mistake arose primarily out of the actions of the labor leaders who endeavored to bring about an air-tight labor monopoly, whose arbitrary policies aroused the bitter antagonism of the employers, whose toleration of violence and assault caused the hair to bristle on their opponents' neck.

In October the teamsters returned to work, beaten. The non-union men hired during the strike retained their places. Long before this the porters and packers, their new organization dis-

persed, had abandoned the strike. At a tremendous cost the complete union monopoly of the freight-handling business had been forestalled, but unionism as such had not been vitally injured. On the contrary, in the succeeding years it became more bitterly, more ruthlessly aggressive than ever before—and it went into politics.

Eugene Schmitz, the orchestra leader who became San Francisco's first union labor mayor

During the strike the unions protested vociferously against the efforts of the police to maintain the peace on the public streets; they objected most strongly against the arming of merchantmen passing through the danger zone, maintaining that it was not the business of the police to convoy "scab" teams or to sit on guard alongside of strikebreakers hauling goods to and from the docks. It is not quite clear just why the union leaders objected to police protection for men not members of their organization, but object they did. And when the police officers during the frequent riots

caused by attacks upon non-union teamsters actually used their clubs, actually swung them and brought them down on the heads of good union men engaged in the pastime of beating up a mere "scab," why, the righteous indignation of the unions knew no bounds. They determined that in future the police must learn to discriminate carefully between union and non-union heads. So they went into politics. Abe Ruef, an obscure lawyer and ward politician, brought out Eugene Schmitz as the Union Labor Party candidate for mayor. Schmitz was a German-Irish-American union musician with an imposing presence and genial manner. On the wave of union resentment he was, greatly to his own astonishment, elected mayor of San Francisco by 21,000 votes out of 53,000 ballots. Abe Ruef, the sponsor of Schmitz and undisputed boss of the victorious party, immediately proceeded to rent more safety-deposit vaults.

Schmitz was reëlected in 1903. Rumors of graft began floating around and boodling was openly charged in the 1905 campaign. Unfortunately organized labor and its sympathizers as usual believed its leaders when they declared that these graft charges were the result of a "capitalist conspiracy" designed to rob the laboring man and his honest representatives of their power. Together with the machinations of self-seeking politicians this attitude of the union men resulted in the election not only of Schmitz but of the entire Union Labor ticket. Organized labor at last was on top. It had both economic and political control over San Francisco. Its goal was achieved.

It is not necessary to dwell on the horrible mess the Union Labor party made of the job. The results startled the country. Instead of raking through the ashes of the old graft scandal, let us survey the results of labor union activities on the Pacific Coast.

It is the unanimous testimony of historians and investigators that the efforts of labor to improve its standing through organization and collective bargaining encountered less opposition in the Far West than anywhere else in the country. Likewise it is an undisputed fact that the necessity for organization was smaller west of the Rockies than in any other part of the nation. The exploitation of women and children never was a problem on the Pacific Coast; sweatshops did not exist; even in the unorganized trades and occupations wages always were higher, hours shorter than elsewhere. Nor did the unions have to fight for the right to organize. From the very beginning the Pacific Coast employers never questioned this right; for fifty years and more there was scarcely one employer who refused to deal with the representatives of the union, who insisted upon his undoubted privilege to determine conditions of work, hours and wages with each individual employee.

And public sentiment was ever on the side of labor, from the day when the California legislature more than sixty years ago fixed ten hours as the maximum workday, through the Chinese exclusion agitation to the present century, when the San Francisco public, having faith in the claim of the labor leaders that the labor administration was honest, that the charges of graft were a calumny manufactured by the capitalists to discredit the unions, reëlected Schmitz and the gang of unscrupulous grafters. Every factor was in favor of the unions, yet what did they accomplish in this most favorable environment?

Guided wisely by farsighted leaders, blinded neither by the glare of sudden success nor goaded into reckless fury, the precious assets that were the birthright of the trade-union movement in the Far West might have been conserved and increased; confidence and good-will between employers and employees might have been maintained and augmented, both sides and the public benefiting thereby. The voice of organized labor might ring more loudly through the halls of Far Western legislatures than it did forty or fifty years ago, might be a direct and most potent factor in shaping legislation. The sympathy of the public for the cause of organized labor might have been enhanced, might have become the deciding factor in the settlement of industrial disputes.

All these most desirable ends were possible of accomplishment. Organized labor had no organized opposition. Consistently for sixty years it had the upper hand. Did the men at the helm steer a course leading toward peace, good-will and mutual confidence? Did they preserve and increase public sympathy? Did they endeavor to be guided by the beacon light of the common good or did they, placing temporary, evanescent advantages and crude class interest above the welfare of the whole, hurt the cause of the man who labors with his hands? To put it tersely, does the record show that the effort of fifty years has improved the position and the esteem of the trade unions in the Far West?

In the fall of 1916 a manufacturer in the state of Washington, a man known for years as the best friend of the labor unions in his line, suddenly changed his allegiance and announced himself a candidate for the nomination for the governorship. His campaign was short; he had only one issue: Introduction of the "open shop." On this platform, in a state with strong trade-union leanings, he almost obtained the nomination, running second in a field of five.

Does this heavy vote for an "open-shop" candidate indicate enhanced sympathy for the cause of organized labor?

San Francisco still is the stronghold of the unions on the Pacific Coast, and one of the strongest weapons of the unions is the picket line. In 1916 the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce

initiated an ordinance prohibiting picketing. It sponsored the measure openly. As openly the full power of the unions was arrayed against it. Few observers familiar with the far-reaching power of the San Francisco unions expected the measure to carry; the labor leaders confidently predicted its defeat. They fought it with all the weapons at their command, yet the anti-picketing ordinance was adopted by the vote of the people in the country's strongest union town.

Does that indicate increasing sympathy for the cause of the trade unions?

The wealthiest union in the country for many years concentrated its efforts and its cash upon the unionization of a single plant in Los Angeles. For years the California unions have been sending men and money into the Angel City, trying to organize its workers and to introduce the closed shop. The open shop still prevails.

Does this failure indicate greater strength on the part of organized labor?

Throughout the Far West, from Butte to San Diego, from El Paso to Seattle, organized labor in the years before the war was losing ground.

Why this general, widespread antagonism toward organizations which once upon a time enjoyed the confidence and good will of all classes?

CHAPTER II

THE BOYCOTT AND ITS ABUSES

Twenty years ago the American musicians were confronted by a horrible dilemma. Art beckoned to them on one side, Art with the capital A—and no other visible assets. On the other side the American Federation of Labor stretched out a grimy, utterly prosaic hand. The hand itself did not appeal to the musicians, but an arm was attached to the hand, and out of the dinner pail dangling from the elbow of this arm came the delicious aroma of bacon and sausage. Art and bacon fought a great battle. Bacon won. The musicians swallowed their pride, cut their hair, joined the Federation of Labor, became good union men and soon had something more substantial than pride to swallow three times a day.

Organization pays the worker big dividends in higher wages and shorter hours. The musicians rapidly discovered this indisputable fact. Their little cliques and groups had been making their headquarters in saloons while Art was on the throne; the union enabled many of them to build substantial headquarters of their own. Before organization they had been glad to play all night for two to four dollars in the Middle West; after organization one dollar per hour became the standard rate. As Artists they had received a dollar and a half for playing at funerals; as union men they received three to five dollars per funeral, with something extra if the mourners were to be uplifted by rollicking airs on the way home. When they were care-free Bohemians, the musical Artists donated their services gratis on Decoration Day; as substantial citizens and good musical mechanics loyal to the union they were able to charge union rates for patriotic airs on all occasions, Memorial Day included.

Within a very few years after its organization the American Federation of Musicians became one of the largest and strongest of the unions in the realm of Samuel Gompers; it grew and expanded until its members obtained an almost airtight monopoly in the production of brassy harmonies and stringy discords throughout the length and breadth of the land.

It takes time, money and at least a modicum of talent to become a passable musical performer. Compared with the necessary length of training, the compensation of the average musician before organization was totally inadequate. His employment was temporary, precarious, fluctuating, and too often he was cheated out of his wages. The union procured for him the

merited increase in pay, remedied scores of abuses, improved his position, made of the musician a really respected citizen.

But—

Unregulated, unsupervised monopoly is not a good thing for any class, group, craft or industry, especially when this monopoly is given the right to use weapons considered criminal in other hands.

What would the country say if the railroad managers threatened to tie up every locomotive unless Congress immediately passed a law *reducing* the wages of the engineers and train men?

The musicians' union, having practically a monopoly of the field, used the strike to lift the wages of its members. When the sharp edge of the strike failed, it had recourse to the thumbscrew of the boycott. This latter instrument the union used so frequently, so indiscriminately that the disgusted theater managers of New York, for instance, a few years ago ended their incessant union-musician troubles by dispensing with their orchestras altogether. And numerous theater managers all over the country followed their example.

Too much boycott killed the musical-monopoly goose that was the steadiest layer on the union ranch.

Here is a sample of the poisonous blossom produced by the boycott when the boycotters have virtually a monopoly of the field:

L. R. Greenfield was running two moving-picture theaters in San Francisco and doing so well that he built a third one. He did not hate the unions. On the contrary, everything in his theaters bore the union label. When the union of the crank-turners had trouble, Greenfield sided with the union rather than with his fellow-employers.

When he built his new theater, he followed the example of hundreds of other modern movie palaces and installed a very large organ. Whereupon Musicians' Union No. 6 promptly declared a boycott against the theater, advertised the boycott in all the labor papers, strung banners across the street in front of the place, had pickets patrolling the entrance to the theater and did everything in its power to ruin Greenfield's venture.

Greenfield had broken no union rules; he was discharging no union men; he was boycotted merely because he preferred the music produced by one union organist to the strains of a union orchestra.

Greenfield, located in the heart of the union-labor stronghold, could not afford to be classed as "unfair to organized labor." He gave in. He notified the musicians' union that he had a perfectly good and most expensive concert organ on his hands and must use it, but that, if the union would cancel the boycott, he

was willing to put four musicians on his payroll at the union scale without requiring any work of any kind from them.

Did the musicians' union accept this most liberal offer?

It did not. It demanded that Greenfield put six union members on his payroll before it would lift the boycott.

Whereupon Greenfield lost patience and, despite the strenuous efforts of the musicians to hush the thing up, presented his case before the Central Labor Council.

That body put its foot down hard, but not on Greenfield. The tactics of the musicians' union were a little too raw. The boycott was lifted and union men today are allowed to patronize the Greenfield shows, to listen to the strains of the organ without having to fear a fine for the benefit of the union treasury.

Please, kind reader, remember that organization, the union, procured for the musician better pay, improved working conditions, a respected place in the economic structure. No one can find fault with the musicians, with any man, capitalist or worker, organized or unorganized, for demanding and going after that which rightfully is his due, yet there should be no hesitation born of sentiment or fear in pointing out the shortcomings of any class when it uses a club to obtain something which is rightfully the other man's due.

If the boycott levied by the musicians' union against the Greenfield picture show were an isolated phenomenon it would not be worth mentioning. But unfortunately the musicians, the labor unions in general, have used the weapon of the boycott so indiscriminately, often so stupidly, so viciously that the boycott's edge has not only been dulled until it no longer cuts—except in the case of helpless firms or individuals—but this stupidly indiscriminate use has given powerful support to the movement which aims to prohibit the boycott by legal enactment.

Here are a few samples, picked at random from a mountain of material, concerning the stupidity and viciousness in the application of the weapon which have rendered the boycott ineffective and decidedly unpopular:

The Scottish societies of Oakland, California, planned a memorial celebration in honor of Robert Burns. The committee arranged for a number of selections by a bagpipe orchestra in order to give the celebration the real Scotch flavor. Unfortunately the bare-kneed Hee'land pipers were not members of the musicians' union. When the committee declined to eliminate the pipers from the program, substituting the common or union variety of music, the union promptly declared a boycott against the celebration and the guests had to march through two lines of vociferous pickets to reach the hall.

The union picket became such a nuisance that San Francisco by popular vote prohibited picketing. The ordinance is partially nullified by the failure of the pro-union administration to enforce its provisions

Still there is this to be said in mitigation: Porridge, Scotch whisky and the works of Bobbie Burns were not placed on the "unfair-to-organized-labor" list.

The Scotch societies were not the only social organization to feel the wrath of the musicians' union.

The Native Sons of the Golden West were boycotted for years merely because they refused to place the amateur bands of the order under the control of the musicians' union. Though the Native Son bands never competed with professional musicians, though they refrained from playing even for the order when a profit might be made out of their syncopated efforts, still the union insisted upon the right to control the appointment of the leaders, to regulate the time and conditions of the bands' performances and stipulated that the members, regardless of their private business, regardless of the fact that music was merely their recreational hobby, should pledge themselves at all times to live up to the union rules. When the order declined to place its bands under the control of the union, organized labor proclaimed a boycott against the Native Sons, keeping it in force for several years.

Allen E. King owns a moving-picture theater in Oakland, California. He employed two operators until the public, disgusted with the quality of the films sent out by the manufacturers began patronizing the movies in decreasing numbers. Watching his dwindling receipts, King decided that he must cut expenses or close up, so he gave one of the operators two weeks' notice. Immediately he received a call from the business agent of the union. He must not discharge the operator. The union would not stand for it. Should he persist in his evil intention, the business agent threatened to have the theater boycotted and the owner's business ruined.

Whether the owner could or could not afford to keep an extra operator on the payroll, that feature did not worry the business agent.

One of the most common causes for the infliction of the boycott is the refusal of the employer to force all his employees to join the union. In other words, the boycott is frequently inflicted by the unions to put into effect a blacklist of their own, for it is clear that a person who, for reasons of his own, declines to join the union would be at perfect liberty to starve in peace if the boycott could be made effective. In passing it should be pointed out that the blacklisting of union men by employers has been made a crime in thirty states, but that the blacklisting of non-union men by organized labor is so common an occurrence that it is unquestioningly accepted everywhere. Yet there is no difference whatsoever in the denial of the right to work no matter who does the denying.

A flagrant instance of the use of the boycott to force workers into the union whether they want to join or not is the ban placed upon a cafeteria in Oakland.

The proprietors of the place paid wages higher than the union scale; the women employed by them were restricted to an eight-hour day by a state law. The employees had nothing to gain by joining the union, yet the business agent of Waitresses' Union No. 48 demanded that the owners force their employees to join the union and that no waitresses be employed except through the union office.

In addition the agreement submitted by the business agent contained the following regulations:

"Steady girls cannot shell peas, string rhubarb, peel apples; they must not clean coffee urns, windows, ice boxes or scrub chairs."

"The lunch girls must not sweep, clean catsup or mustard bottles nor polish silver; they must not pick strawberries."

In other words, if the waitresses have nothing to do during the working period for which they are paid, they must sit by idly while extra help is hired to polish the silver.

When the owners of the cafeteria declined to force their waitresses into the union, a boycott was declared and remained in force for years.

In July, 1915, the Langendorf Bakery of San Francisco engaged the services of a chemist who had built up a reputation in the manufacture of a certain kind of bread. When the chemist arrived, the firm was notified by the business agent of the bakers' union that the place should have been offered a member of the union and that a boycott would follow if the chemist were allowed to work. The firm immediately asked the business agent to submit the names of technically trained, experienced bread chemists. Though no names were forthcoming, the imported chemist was not allowed to assume his duties until, through the threat of a boycott, he had been obliged to join the bakers' union.

A week after the Quaker cafeteria opened for business in Sacramento, California, organized labor put the place on the "unfair" list and established a picket line to keep trade away and to take down the names of union members patronizing the restaurant that they might be fined for violation of the boycott. The boycott was levied at the request of the cooks' and waiters' union to force the owner to discharge a non-union cook and to keep the owner's daughter from singing in the cafeteria.

Not even the dead can escape the boycott. Some years ago the last rites were being said over the body of Mrs. Cecelia Eadon in San Francisco when the business agent of the chauffeurs' union drove up and ordered the union chauffeurs not to move if an

"unfair" cab should join the procession. This cab had been donated by a friend of the dead woman who happened to be the wife of a boycotted undertaker. To avoid delay, the mourners in the "unfair" cab drove to the cemetery before the services were over, but they were followed by a union agent and the funeral was delayed for almost an hour and a half until the mourners left the "unfair" cab and the machine departed from the cemetery.

The word "boycott" is a product of the Ould Sod. Its godfather was a Captain Boycott, agent of an English landlord, who bestowed upon the Irish tenants in his power treatment so harsh and cruel that at a given moment the entire countryside refused to have anything to do with him. His servants vanished, his hired help quit, his mail was not delivered and no one could be induced to stir a hand for him. Though a thousand armed Ulstermen came to harvest his crops, ultimately the total cessation of social and business intercourse forced him to leave Ireland.

The encyclopedia defines the boycott as a conspiracy on the part of a number of persons to inflict damage and injury upon an individual. And the encyclopedia adds that in most countries the boycott has been declared illegal and its use restricted by the courts. This restriction, in the United States at least, does not apply to the direct or primary boycott.

In the primary boycott the wrath of organized labor is directed solely against the person or firm declining to grant the union demands. Practically all of the instances cited above are examples of the primary boycott, and the primary boycott has been held to be within the law by nearly every court in the United States. The secondary boycott, however, has been declared illegal with almost the same unanimity by the American courts. And the classic example of the secondary boycott is the case of the Danbury hatters for whose benefit the American Federation of Labor is still trying to collect a sum in excess of $300,000.

This famous case originated in a dispute between the hatters' union of Danbury, Connecticut, and the firm of D. E. Loewe & Co., hat manufacturers. The union, of course, reached for the boycott the moment it was seen that the prospect of winning was exceedingly slim. But this boycott was not confined to the Loewe firm; it was extended to include hundreds of hat and furnishing stores throughout the country. Merchants who declined to obey the union and discontinue the sale of Loewe hats were boycotted, picket lines thrown across the entrances to their stores and their names were placed on the "unfair list" in dozens of union-labor publications.

These merchants had nothing whatsoever to do with the dispute between the hat manufacturers and their men. The

union had the right so strongly to influence organized labor and the public in general that not a single Loewe hat might move from the merchants' shelves, thus ruining its antagonists without giving them a chance to strike back. But when the union overstepped the bounds, when it used the secondary boycott to force hundreds of merchants through threats of pecuniary losses and possible ruin to cease buying Loewe hats, it deliberately wrecked the boat while crossing the barred zone.

The hat manufacturers immediately brought suit for damages against the union and its every member. Though the legal talent and the funds of the American Federation of Labor came to the aid of the hatters, the employers won. From the federal district court to the Supreme Court of the United States the case went, and in every instance the secondary boycott was declared illegal, the verdict against the hatters' union was confirmed. The Loewe Company obtained judgment against all the members of the union and scores of the Danbury hatters will lose their homes unless their brother unionists come to their assistance and raise almost $400,000 to satisfy the judgments.

Since the Supreme Court decision in the Danbury hatters' case organized labor everywhere has been exceedingly cautious in the use of the double-edged, expensive secondary boycott—except in California and Montana. While the courts of England, the federal courts and the bench of almost every American state have ruled against the secondary boycott as an unwarranted interference with the rights of innocent third parties, the supreme courts of California and Montana have taken the contrary view. Hence California and Montana, significantly containing San Francisco and Butte, the two strongest fortresses of union labor in the United States, are still covered with the itching rash of the secondary boycott.

An example of the manner in which the secondary boycott works out is supplied by the union ban upon the use of hardwood flooring strips made by "open-shop" labor.

Practically all floor workers in San Francisco are members of the union. Though no hardwood material originates in or near San Francisco, the Building Trades Council has decreed that no "unfair" boards can be placed in San Francisco floors. Should a contractor persist in using "unfair-to-organized-labor" material, his men will strike and he will be driven out of business through the boycott. Presumably this boycott is placed on hardwood strips in the interest of American labor unions, but it does not work out that way when the veil is lifted.

San Francisco has the choice of two sources of supply for hardwood strips. It can use the white oak cut in the Middle West and South by American labor, manufactured in American mills and

transported by American railroads. Or it can apply to the Mitsui company for Japanese oak cut in Japan by Japanese labor, manufactured in Japanese mills and transported in Japanese steamers.

The Mitsui company has exclusive control over the importation of Japanese oak shipped to America in rough strips. It also has a contract with the Inlaid Floor Company of San Francisco under which practically all of the imported oak goes to this concern, which consists of seventeen labor union men. They run the oak strips through their planers and presto! the timber cut by cheap Japanese labor, sawed by cheap Japanese labor, transported by cheap Japanese labor suddenly becomes "fair" to the organized labor of San Francisco, or at least to seventeen San Francisco union men. Running the cheap-labor Japanese oak through a planer operated by a San Francisco union man entitles the product to the union label. Without this label it is boycotted.

Eastern oak, cut, manufactured and transported by high-priced American workers, many of them union men, cannot be used in San Francisco because the Eastern mills do not employ union men exclusively. Hence the Eastern white oak, in order to remove the open-shop odor, must be run through a union mill in San Francisco to become "fair" at an extra and wholly unnecessary cost of four to six dollars per thousand feet. This extra cost bars American oak out of the San Francisco market. Hence the only effect of the boycott, besides putting money into the pockets of seventeen union members, is to force the entire San Francisco hardwood floor trade to buy the product of cheap oriental labor against which the unions have been carrying on a vigorous campaign for sixty years.

The city of Stockton lies a hundred miles inland from San Francisco on the navigable San Joaquin river in the midst of a highly productive farming region. Its strategic location attracted a great many industries, but the industrial growth has not been an unmixed blessing. For many years Stockton was in a state of continuous turmoil and irritation caused by the incessant attempts of the labor leaders to make it impossible for even one non-union man to work for a living in the city. The boycott was one of the principal weapons used to enforce the demands, and its indiscriminate application in 1914 led to a series of disastrous strikes which shook the community clear to its foundations. The following are a few of the demands which the unions endeavored to enforce by means of the boycott:

Twenty unions insisted that no employer should hire an out-of-town worker so long as a single member of the twenty Stockton unions remained idle.

The plumbers' union demanded that any member owning a bicycle should be forbidden the use of the vehicle on his way from the shop to the job. Walking would, of course, use up more time.

If a small contracting bricklayer or plasterer had a one-day job, the rules barred him from mixing his own mortar. He must not only employ a union hod-carrier for the task, but in addition he must pay the union hod-carrier a full day's wages even if the mortar-mixing were done in an hour.

The business agent or walking delegate of any union, according to the demands, must have the right to visit all jobs or plants at any time, to talk with any employee and, if necessary, to have the men stop the machinery to listen to him.

Tailors or printers were to be forced to surrender their jobs temporarily to needy union members at the request of the union secretary, regardless of the needy one's fitness for the job.

No carpet mechanic was to be allowed to cut, fit or lay carpets unless a union member had taken the measurements. If the purchaser should take the measurements himself, the merchant would have to send a union man to do the work over again.

The employers were to be obliged not only to deduct the union dues from the wages of their employees, but likewise to hold back any assessment or fines levied by the business agent.

To enforce these and other regulations of a similar nature the Stockton unions employed the boycott ruthlessly. In the period from 1903 to 1917 more than a hundred firms and individuals were boycotted. Stockton's largest department store was put out of business through the boycott. Clothing merchants, grocers, barbers, contractors, hotels, restaurants, coal dealers, livery stables, printers, shoe dealers, engine works, carriage builders, iron works were driven out of business through the boycott. Even a dentist had to give up his practice and move away because the labor leaders set the forces of the boycott in motion against him.

Before me lies a typewritten partial list of the boycotts declared in Stockton since 1903, a list covering four full pages. The results of these boycotts are significant. With few exceptions it was the weak firm, the modest contractor, the struggling tradesman, the debt-ridden enterprise that succumbed; wealthy, successful solidly established firms and enterprises felt the boycott merely as a pin prick, annoying and somewhat painful, but not at all dangerous. It is the little fellow who suffers while the big one calmly goes his way, unconscious of the cobweb barriers with which the leaders of organized labor are trying to bar his way. Not infrequently it happens that the business of a strongly intrenched firm increases under the boycott. Thus a certain

lithographic company of San Francisco, after a boycott lasting more than a year, suggested to the Central Labor Council that the boycott be suspended until the firm could catch up with the abnormal flood of orders, when the stimulating ban might be resumed.

If every union man obeyed the mandate of the leaders and refused to patronize boycotted firms, the ordinary channels of business would be clogged in twenty-four hours. Practically all the important railway systems of the Far West are on one "unfair" list or another, have been on these lists almost since the last bellow of the last buffalo. But, so far as I can discover, no union man with the price of the ticket has ever walked across the mountains and deserts of the West because he did not want to patronize the boycotted railroads. Nor has the sale of two-score nationally known commodities shown the slightest decrease because their manufacturers were boycotted; in fact, practically all of them have experienced a normal, healthy growth.

The truth of the matter is that the neutral portion of the population, the ninety million persons neither directly nor indirectly affiliated with labor unions, are weary of the boycott. They have seen it applied so often, with so little reason, with so little regard for the consequences, they have been badgered and harried so incessantly with request, demands and orders not to patronize this firm, to cease buying that commodity, that they calmly go their way, disregarding all appeals. The boycott has been overdone. As a result of abuse it has lost its cutting edge. Except in flagrant cases of exploitation on the part of the employer the days of its usefulness to organized labor are practically over. Only in strongly unionized communities, and there only in strongly unionized trades, does the boycott continue to be a formidable weapon, formidable at least to the smallest and weakest among the employers.

San Francisco is strongly unionized. In the building trades the "closed shop" prevails; non-union men are blacklisted. Under these conditions the boycott is fatal when levied against the average building contractor. Unable to obtain workmen, unable to join the union and therefore unable to support himself as a journeyman, he either has to leave town or go into another business. Under the circumstances it would seem that the application of the boycott would be surrounded by all possible safeguards to prevent its infliction upon an innocent person.

Is it?

A plastering contractor last year remonstrated with the business agent of the plasterers' union who was cursing the contractor's employees for doing too much work. The contractor called the business agent's attention to the union rule which

prohibited direct intercourse with the men during working hours and requested him to transact his business with the shop steward. When the business agent refused, the contractor threw him out. Two hours later the men were called out.

Two days later a boycott was declared against the contractor's father, also a plastering contractor, by the executive committee of the Building Trades Council. He had violated no union rule; he was paying union wages, working union hours, employing none but union men. Yet, because he advised and supported his son in his dispute with the business agent, he was arbitrarily boycotted and threatened with ultimate ruin.

In any serious discussion of the labor problem undertaken with the object of shedding even a faint glimmer of light on the path which may lead to the ultimate solution, it should never be forgotten that almost every weapon, every measure of the labor unions was at some time, at some place, caused and justified by intolerable conditions of employment. The labor unions have no monopoly of greed, unreasonableness and arbitrary intolerance; of these qualities there is to be found an abundant supply in all strata of the industrial structure, from attic to basement. Yet any unbiased observer must admit that, on the Pacific Coast at least, enlightened adaptation to changing conditions is proceeding faster among employers than among the leaders of labor's regiments.

The old-style labor leaders of the Pacific Coast cannot as yet understand that the heyday, the unrestricted use, of the boycott and its effectiveness are definitely past. Employers and the neutral public have made immense, far-reaching concessions to labor in the last ten years. Law after law restricting the economic power of the employer has been placed on the statute books; in California especially dozens of measures for the special benefit of the working man have been enacted during the last few years. Is it too much to ask of organized labor to surrender in return an obsolete weapon blunted by frequent misuse, to remove a source of incessant irritation and annoyance, to do away with the secondary boycott which has already been declared illegal by the courts of all Western states except California and Montana?

The pressing necessity for the use of this weapon has passed long ago. Against powerful employers it is worse than useless. Against the small employer it becomes the potential weapon of tyranny and oppression when used by men responsible for their actions not even to their own followers. It is time that it join the blacklist, the twelve-hour day and the company-store in the cabinet of industrial curiosities.

CHAPTER III

WHO KILLED COCK ROBIN?

They found a dead man in Leicester, England, seventeen years ago. He had cut his throat. Beside the body lay a note in which the suicide explained that his shopmates had made life a burden to him and that he decided to end it all when he received a summons to appear before the officials of the boot and shoe workers' union.

Why was he summoned before the union officials?

To explain why he persisted in doing *too much work.*

He had gone from shoe factory to shoe factory, quitting after short periods when his fellow-workers began to make things unpleasant for him because he did more work than they. Nowhere did he find peace. When at last the union took official cognizance of his industry, the foolish worker committed suicide.

Do you know what "Ca' canny" is?

"Ca' canny, mon, ca' canny," says Jock when Sandy walks too fast. "Go easy, man, go easy." "Ca' canny" became a generic term during the British shipping troubles of 1896 when the sailors used the "Go easy" policy to bring the owners to terms by increasing the cost of operating the ships. The term was new but the policy was not. It pervaded British trade unionism and its wide-spread application caused British industry to lose portions even of its home markets.

And what has all this to do with the dead shoe worker of Leicester?

British industry was not holding its own before the war. Many circumstances contributed to its relative deterioration, and there is abundant testimony that the "Go easy" policy of the trade unionists helped this weakening process along. Here are a few of the results:

A century and a half ago German workers were brought into England by Lord Delavel to manufacture the dark bottles used mainly for wine. The industry expanded until a dozen works were supplying the home market. Before the war the Germans had practically reconquered the English market for these bottles and the English union of bottle blowers had enabled them to do it. The union dominated the trade. The union opposed the introduction of the improved German machinery which increased the output per man and decreased the amount of skill necessary in the trade. The union succeeded in maintaining its control, but the industry almost vanished.

The flint-glass factories produce table ware, vases, decorated glass and globes for lighting fixtures. Forty years ago fifty plants manufactured flint-glass in Great Britain. Before the war their number had shrunk to barely twenty; ninety per cent of the flint-glass used in England came from Germany and Austria, which nations had also captured the export markets formerly supplied by Britain. The flint-glass trade in England is dominated by the union. It is an absolutely "closed shop." The men work in shifts of six hours and the men themselves determine what the output of any given design shall be per shift. In one instance the men were turning out a widely sold export article at the rate of eighty in six hours. By-and-by continental glass houses began to undersell the English manufacturers and take their markets away from them. In order to be able to compete the men were requested to increase the output. They agreed to remove the low limit and to make one hundred instead of eighty per shift.

The new arrangement had been in force for some time when a general officer of the union notified the employer that the output had been raised without his consent and that the lower number must be restored within two weeks on a penalty of a strike.

Wrote a flint-glass manufacturer:

"The only conclusion left to a glass-master is that some of the leaders (of the union) could not do worse if they were secretly subsidized by the German glass-hands to ruin the English trade."

Sheffield scissors, razors and cutlery used to be the standard the world over. The famous scissors were made from a rod of steel by the hand-forgers' union and ground by the grinders' union. When German manufacturers proceeded to use stamping machines instead of hand labor to produce scissors and razors, they so far reduced the cost of production that they not only captured the English colonial but a large part of the English home market as well. When the English manufacturers introduced automatic machines, the grinders' union declined to reduce its rate for grinding the more uniform machine product, thus keeping the cost high. No more machinery was installed and the trade gradually dwindled. For similar reasons the razor industry declined from year to year. In other Sheffield trades the gradual decay was arrested only when the manufacturers broke the hold of the union and, against the opposition of the craft organizations, introduced automatic machinery which enabled them to compete with other nations on fairly equal terms.

Restriction of output on the part of the London Society of Lithographic Printers caused more and more of the color-printing work originating in London to go to other cities or to Germany.

The union had no official rule limiting the output, but any man who exceeded the limit tacitly agreed upon found himself in hot water. When another lithographic union composed of younger men entered London, hours were not increased and no cut in wages was made, but the output restriction ceased to be enforced and costs fell more than fifteen per cent, this reduction immediately checking the rush of orders to Germany.

An English steel mill introduced electrically driven machines for the charging of open-hearth furnaces. It expected to follow the foreign practice and have one man operate three of the charging machines. Instead, the union demanded that the three men which had been charging each furnace by hand be retained, the machines notwithstanding, thus enabling eight men to draw wages for enjoying their smoke while one man did the work. After prolonged negotiations the union consented to a rearrangement which absorbed a large share of cost reduction for which the machines had been installed.

The same practice more or less permeated all the metal trades. The conditions surrounding the introduction of labor-saving machinery caused such disputes that in many instances this automatic machinery had to be housed in special buildings as a protection against union men, and when the unions did accept the inevitable they endeavored to introduce the rule that one man should tend only one machine, even though in other countries two or three of the machines were operated by one workman.

Right here let us pause to remark that in most instances the trouble resulting from the introduction of labor-saving machinery is fully as much traceable to the selfishness of the employer as to the unreasonable demands of the union men. In the case of the British shoe industry, for instance, the employers considered the introduction of American machinery an auspicious moment to change the rate of pay from the piece to the time basis. In other words, they hoped to appropriate the entire increase in production to themselves. The union, on the other hand, proposed to retain the old handwork rates for the enormously increased machine output, conceding the employer only the interest on the capital invested in the new machines. Thus both sides claimed the *entire* benefit resulting from the introduction of machinery and a deadlock was the consequence.

Admitting the blind selfishness of human nature which causes both employers and workers to try to appropriate the full benefit of new inventions to themselves, yet it is a fact that restriction of output in many guises assisted in making possible the German victories of 1915.

"Either we must tell the soldiers that we are sorry that we cannot get the guns to enable them to win throughout 1916, *owing*

to the trade-union regulations, or we must tell them that if they manage to hold out for another year perhaps American workmen will help us get a sufficient supply for 1917. I cannot return to Parliament and report through the House of Commons to the British army that skilled workmen won't *suspend their rules* to save their fellow-countrymen's lives on the battlefield."

No union baiter, no professional enemy of organized labor made this statement. Lloyd George, champion of the rights of English labor, addressed these words to the British Trade Union Congress on the dark night of Christmas, 1915, six months after the passage of the Munitions of War Act, which contains the following clause:

"*Any rule, practice or custom not having the force of law which tends to restrict production or employment shall be suspended in the establishment, and if any person induces or attempts to induce any other person (whether any particular person or generally) to comply, or continue to comply, with such a rule, practice, or custom, that person shall be guilty of an offense under this Act.*"

In the hour of her trial England found it necessary to pass a law against the restriction of output in the vital munitions factories by the trade unions. Despite the law and its penalties, despite the urgings of patriotism, despite the disasters in the field, the output restrictions continued until Lloyd George, through personal appeal to the leaders and to the men, brought about their reluctant removal.

Since then the remarkable, almost incredible increase in the output of the British factories has been the marvel of the industrial world, though this increase was by no means entirely due to the removal of union restrictions.

The United States has gone to war. The United States today is in a position similar to the one in which Great Britain found herself in 1915. The United States must raise, equip and train huge armies. This necessitates a reduction of the available productive labor. At the same time the output of practically every factory, shipyard and farm must be increased. Never was the demand for labor more insistent; never has the proportionate supply been smaller.

Under the circumstances it becomes proper to put this question: Do the rules and practices of American trade unions tend to restrict output?

In answering the question, the scope of the inquiry will be restricted to the Pacific Coast and more especially to San Francisco, strongest citadel of unionism.

The first exhibit consists of the by-laws of the ship caulkers' union. These by-laws provided in 1916 that eight hours shall constitute the length of the working day, that five dollars shall

be the standard wage. They also provided that one hundred feet of side seam or one hundred and fifty feet of deck seam shall constitute a day's task on old work.

It is a fact that an average caulker sufficiently skilled to entitle him to union wages could turn out a great deal more work in eight hours than the maximum fixed by the union without unduly "speeding up." Merely by keeping resonably busy the average caulker could complete 135 feet of side or 200 feet of deck seam. But he didn't. He was very careful not to exceed the maximum and lay himself open to a fine. When he went to work in the morning, he took a string, measured off the day's allotment of 100 or 150 feet respectively and saw to it that the stint was not exceeded.

Observe that the English caulkers' union before the war fixed the maximum daily output at 120 feet of deck seam, 30 feet less than the San Francisco union.

In this discussion it should be remembered that the average union workman is neither lazy nor dishonest. If he adopts the "Go easy" policy, his motives are not always sefish. He may wish to prolong the job he is working on if he sees no new work in sight and fears to be laid off, but more often he holds back, wastes time and fails to put forth his best efforts because he hopes through his loafing to increase the number of employed members of his craft.

The caulkers and ship carpenters, however, are only a small part of the industrial army that must be mobilized on the Pacific Coast to meet the emergency of war demands. Every foundry, every machine shop, every steel ship yard, every plant manufacturing engines, tractors, motors must be able to increase its output.

If the contentions of the trade union leaders are correct, San Francisco should have been able to hold and to increase its industrial lead materially. The leaders of organized labor claim that the best workmen belong to the unions, that non-union men as a class are inferior in skill and ability and that union men therefore perform more and better work than non-union men. They further claim that non-union men, working longer hours for smaller wages, are chronically discontented and naturally take less interest in their work than better paid union men who give the best that is in them and whose employer therefore is able to produce his commodity for less money, other conditions being equal, than the employer of non-union mechanics.

If this is a fair statement of the claims of organized labor, the city employing the highest percentage of union men in its establishments should logically show the highest percentage of industrial growth. If, on the other hand, trade unions do not

produce a greater output of higher grade for the higher wages they receive, if they restrict output tacitly or openly, if they increase the cost of production by rules designed to give employment to as many union men as possible regardless of cost, then it follows that the most thoroughly organized community must inevitably show the smallest percentage of industrial growth especially in those lines exposed to the active competition of communities where the unions do not completely dominate the field.

The following table, compiled from the reports of the U. S. Census Bureau, contains in cold figures the strongest possible indictment of the short-sighted policy followed by the San Francisco trade unions:

MANUFACTURING DATA, BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

City	No. of Establishments			No. of Wage Earners		
	1899	1914	Increase	1899	1914	Increase
Salt Lake	154	366	212	2154	4931	2777
Spokane	84	278	194	1060	3021	1971
Portland	408	837	429	5380	11271	5891
Seattle	352	1014	672	4440	12429	7989
Oakland	195	573	378	2476	7692	5216
Los Angeles	534	1911	1377	5173	31352	26179
San Francisco	1748	2334	586	32555	31758	*797

*Decrease

The following are figures compiled by the Census Bureau giving the changes in particular San Francisco trades during the decade from 1904 to 1914:

	1904	1914
BRASS, COPPER AND BRONZE PRODUCTS		
No. Establishments	15	13
Employees	324	122
COPPER, TIN AND SHEET IRON PRODUCTS		
No. Establishments	50	90
Employees	1466	1187
FOUNDRY AND MACHINE SHOP PRODUCTS		
No. Establishments	172	243
Employees	3885	2383
LUMBER AND TIMBER PRODUCTS		
No. Establishments	52	59
Employees	1262	1420
BOAT AND SHIPBUILDING		
No. Establishments	24	16
Employees	3465	2130

The reason for this decline?

I was discussing labor conditions with the proprietor of a San Francisco machine shop.

"Is there restriction of output? According to my observation in my own line, the San Francisco machinists are just about fifty per cent efficient. My men average five dollars a day. I could and would pay them fifty per cent more if they would do a full day's work because my profit would be greater than under the present five-dollar scale. I am rushed with orders, so rushed that I need at least three additional mechanics. I can't get union men. If I employ non-union men, the entire force walks out. What can I do about it? Move out of San Francisco, across the bay! My new plant is now going up over there where I can put on seventy-five men whether they belong to the union or not.

"Let me tell you of an instance that occurred recently. A few days ago a first-class mechanic whom I had known in the East came in here. He had gone to work in a shop cutting gear blanks. Having been doing work on a piece basis, he started at his usual pace and cut twenty-eight to thirty blanks in eight hours. At once he was told by the other mechanics not to queer the job. Why? Because the man on the following shift was turning out only eight blanks in eight hours!"

A San Francisco firm sells patented stump pullers. It has no factory of its own. This firm asked for bids on ten thousand of the machines, assembled and ready for delivery. Half a dozen San Francisco firms put in bids, but the order went to Portland, Oregon, because the San Francisco bids were twenty to one hundred per cent higher than the other offers.

The San Francisco manufacturers explained that they could not meet the Portland bids on account of higher labor costs. In Portland the manufacturers were able to run automatic machines performing the same operation ten thousand times with "specialists"—semi-skilled workers—at a higher speed and for less wages; in San Francisco the union required the employment of journeymen machinists at full union rates for every operation. Also, the San Francisco union held down the number of apprentices and privately opposed the employment of "specialists" in an effort to retain as much work as possible for its members, no matter whether the nature of the work was such that a green man could learn to perform it efficiently in a month or two.

From instances of this character can be deduced the reason why San Francisco's industrial growth has lagged behind that of its competitors, why the oldest and most important industrial center of the Pacific Coast was rapidly turning into a jobbing and repair instead of manufacturing center before the war stimulus with its total disregard of production costs made itself felt.

San Francisco fell behind not because its industries were one hundred per cent unionized. Every unbiased observer admits that as a rule there are far more of the best and most competent mechanics within the unions than outside their ranks. **The slump did not come primarily because San Francisco employers paid their men higher wages and worked them shorter hours than in competing districts. The damage was done because the unions, instead of helping the employers to meet open-shop competition by the utmost co-operation, used their power to retard the process of production, to increase costs and to retain their monopoly even if the industry should die.**

The unions in the Sheffield cutlery trades, in the flint-glass industry and in many other branches fought the introduction and full utilization of improved machinery, closed the union against outsiders, sharply limited the number of apprentices and saw to it that, through restriction of output, the largest possible number of union members should be kept employed. In spite of all these measures the number of union men steadily decreased when one plant after the other, unable to withstand outside competition, closed its doors. One hundred per cent organization killed the trade because it did not deliver one hundred per cent efficiency in return for high wages, short hours and labor monopoly.

It could have done so. The cotton spinners and weavers of Lancashire are one hundred per cent organized. They do not restrict the number of apprentices; on the contrary, they insist that there shall be ten times more learners than could possibly be used as operatives in order to be able to select the best and fittest; they do not oppose the introduction of improved processes nor do they try to hold the individual output to a low level in order to give employment to a larger number. Years ago the union leaders realized the futility, the ineffectiveness of these expedients in the field of international competition. They adopted a totally different policy. They based the workers' compensation upon the individual output, insisting only upon a collectively fixed piece rate fair to both worker and employer. They demanded and obtained a fair share of the increased product derived from improved machinery and, realizing that the prosperity of the entire industry depended upon its average efficiency, they penalized the backward employer by a higher piece rate until he was forced to instal the very latest machinery.

Thanks to this enlightened policy of the union the Lancashire cotton textile industry maintained its world leadership. Its operatives worked reasonable hours, received excellent wages and yet the manufacturers were able to hold more than their own even against the product of the child labor exploited in the cotton mills of the American South.

In San Francisco limitation of apprentices, of output, bitter opposition to piece work, refusal to recognize individual efficiency even as a partial measure of compensation still hold full sway. Trades one hundred per cent organized, receiving higher wages and working shorter hours than trades in competing territory, still decline to make an effort to deliver one hundred per cent efficiency, refuse to demonstrate that union men working under strictly union conditions enable their employers to compete successfully with non-union plants. The result of this policy is stated below, in extracts of letters printed in Volume 6, Testimony and Report of the Commission on Industrial Relations, issued by the Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.

"You have our permission to submit the name of our firm to the United States Commission on Industrial Relations as one that was forced to move out of San Francisco through impositions of union labor," writes J. W. Mason, president of the Western Pipe and Steel Company.

"We are hardly able to qualify your statement that we were obliged by reason of labor-union conditions to remove our plant from San Francisco," states F. J. Behneman, manager of the Joshua Hendy Iron Works.

A. Warenskjold, of the Atlas Gas Engine Company, explains his firm's removal in the following words:

"One of the main objects which caused us to move from San Francisco to Oakland was the fact that San Francisco was so overrun with agitators, walking delegates, etc., that it was impossible to think of anything like industrial peace."

O. H. Fischer, vice-president and general manager of the Union Gas Engine Company, signs a letter of which the following is an extract:

"The chief reason which prompted our moving away from San Francisco was the fact that we expected to escape the unsatisfactory conditions that were beginning to be imposed by the local unions. . .

"We were preceded by one of our competitors, the Hercules Gas Engine Company . . . and we were followed by the Standard and the Atlas Gas Engine companies."

R. S. Moore, of the Moore & Scott Iron Works, thus explains the firm's situation:

"The firm of Moore & Scott was formed in 1905, at which time it purchased the business of Marshutz & Cantrell, at Main and Howard streets, San Francisco, which firm made a specialty of logging engines and lumber supplies.

"The new firm soon found that the logging engines, hoists, etc., used in the lumber camps were being manufactured in Portland and Seattle and sold at less than they could be manufactured for

in San Francisco. To make up for the loss of this business the firm purchased the shipbuilding yards of W. A. Boole & Sons, on Oakland harbor . . .

"For your information the Fulton Iron Works, one of the oldest established firms in San Francisco, went out of business some years ago after having been operated at a loss for several years.

"A few years ago the Risdon Iron & Locomotive Works, another old established firm, also liquidated, being unable to hold its own on account of competition elsewhere.

"A few months ago the Keystone Boiler Works decided to quit, their business being taken over by another machine company of this city."

In addition Mr. Moore volunteered the information that in 1913 he declined to bid on a 4000-ton vessel because the closed shop made it impossible for the firm to compete with Los Angeles and Seattle builders running open shops.

The census figures and manufacturers' statements do not make pleasant reading for San Francisco. Of course the labor union spokesmen vociferously deny that the demands and practices of trade unionism have anything whatsoever to do with San Francisco's former industrial stagnation and they shoulder the blame upon the greed of the land owners who raised prices to exorbitant levels. But this explanation does not account for the actual decrease in the number of wage earners between 1899 and 1914, during a period when land values in Los Angeles, Portland, Seattle and Oakland grew far more rapidly than in San Francisco.

While San Francisco stood still, all its rivals showed a tremendous industrial growth, *soaring land values notwithstanding.* San Francisco had more and cheaper electric power than Los Angeles, a richer, more varied trade territory than any other community on the coast; in financial resources it outstripped almost all its competitors combined; it was the oldest industrial center in the Far West, with trade connections established when its rivals were mere cow towns or sawmill camps, yet San Francisco was not able to hold its own in the industrial race.

Only two explanations are possible. Either the San Francisco manufacturers collectively were inferior in brains, business acumen and executive ability to their competitors, or else labor conditions brought about by the closed shop of the craft unions imposed upon them a production cost handicap which they were unable to overcome.

Which explanation is the right one?

Perhaps a few additional facts concerning union regulations will help the reader to determine the issue.

Until a few years ago the press rooms of San Francisco's job printing plants were closed to all except union men. Like its

London prototype, the pressfeeders' union stipulated that one feeder should be permanently attached to each press. If the feeder finished a run during the first morning hour, he stayed with his press even though it might take two or three hours before the next job was ready for him; the union denied the employer the right to shift the idle feeder to another task.

An example of even more flagrant waste of time and effort is supplied by a rule of the typographical union which forbids newspapers the use of an electrotype advertisement unless the advertisement has been entirely reset. If, for instance, a firm causes an advertisement to be set and sends a stereotyper's matrix to each of the four San Francisco dailies for insertion, each paper is compelled to have the entire advertisement set anew in its composing room. Thereafter the matrix is cast and used; the type of this useless hand-set advertisement by-and-by is redistributed in the cases at additional expense. The whole transaction is on par with the famous operation of shifting a pile of bricks from one corner to the other and back again, except that the type shifter gets five dollars a day for his time.

There are many more instances illustrating the efforts of many San Francisco unions to hamper and restrict production in order to "make" work for more men; the building trades especially abound in clear-cut examples—but that is another story. Just now I wish to reiterate the assertion that the closed shop and high cost of production need not necessarily go hand in hand. The closed shop means the exclusive employment of union members at union hours, wages and *under conditions prescribed by the union.* It is admitted that the percentage of highly skilled, first-class mechanics is far greater within most craft unions than outside of them. On account of this higher percentage of skill and efficiency it is therefore theoretically possible that a unionized plant should go below or at least equal the unit labor cost of the non-union or open-shop plant, notwithstanding its higher wages and shorter hours. It can be done, it should be done if the claims of trade unionism are based on fact, but in actual practice performance usually lags far behind the claims. Disregarding the element of competition entirely, the majority of the San Francisco crafts still believe that it is the duty of every good union man not to "hog" the available work, to stretch it so as to give as many union members as possible a chance to work.

This is *not* a mean spirit when it is pure; its roots reach to the spring of fraternity and altruism, but its stem produces queer blossoms. Where it prevails, the union defeats itself, constantly *diminishes* the number of its employed members so long as the unionized industry must compete with plants unhampered by union restrictions on the individual output.

Yet it is not necessary to do away with the unions, to throw the shop wide open, to stretch hours and trim wages in order to meet non-union competition. The union of the cotton operatives in Lancashire has conclusively demonstrated that plants run under strict union conditions, paying high wages for reasonable hours, can be brought to so high a state of efficiency that they can beat the world. But Ca' canny will never do it.

Abnormal conditions have eliminated competition up and down the Pacific Coast, at least so far as the metal trades are concerned. Now open shop and closed shop are on a level, with the open shop offering the mechanic opportunities for higher earnings on piece work than the fixed time rate of the union plants. Employers are bidding against one another for labor of all kinds; the "marginal man" of the economist, the source of all labor's tribulations, has been turned into the "marginal employer." Now, in the heyday of their greatest prosperity and power, is the chance of the unions in San Francisco, throughout the Far West to discard their traditional policy of hampering production, to take the lead in a movement for greater efficiency, to fortify themselves against the inevitable reaction by insisting that the union mechanic *lead* instead of lag in production. Now is the time to think not only of obtaining a fair share of the employer's extraordinary profits, but to plan for the future, to consider the period when the metal and shipbuilding trades slow down again, when the unions will be confronted by masses of men and women able to run automatic metal-working machinery as well and faster than the skilled all-round mechanic. Now is the time to get behind the barbed wire of individual efficiency, to abandon the ineffective mass-formation tactics and allow the individual full opportunity for the display of his best energy and skill at a living minimum rate fixed through collective bargaining.

And now also is the time for the employer to remember that the extraordinary earnings of the best and fastest man furnish no excuse for slashing the rate all around; he must realize that he cannot maintain high efficiency by penalizing it; he must ever keep before him the fact that every hour's effort diminishes the worker's sole capital, his labor power, and that the compensation must provide not only for bare existence and brute reproduction, but for those things that enable man to lift himself above the level of the work horse.

For the moment the great war has lifted the curse of ruthless competition based on cheap and cheaper production from the world; every industrial nation is reorganizing on a new basis, is discovering new possibilities in the readjustment and coördination of the relations between labor and capital. Will the unions and the employers of the Pacific Coast fall in line?

CHAPTER IV

WHAT CAN YOUR BOY DO?

Let us assume the worst. Suppose you, kind friend, with a wife and two children dependent upon you, with the payments on the house and on the life insurance policy to meet, should be fired day after tomorrow. Suppose that you, without any cause except of pure economic origin, should see your job taken from you every six weeks or two months. Would you like it? Wouldn't you do everything in your power to nail that job down, to keep others out of it, to diminish if you could the number of candidates entering the lists against you for the work?

Of course you would hang on with your teeth and keep competition away with both hands and both feet. A saint might fold his arms, roll his eyes to heaven and step aside, but the average man will fight for his bread, butter and lamb chops till the cows come home. Nor will he be extremely particular as to who gets hurt in the scramble and how.

With these preliminary reflections upon a fundamental trait of human nature let us take a peek at the manner in which the San Francisco roofers protect their particular jobs.

Local No. 25, International Brotherhood of Composition Roofers, Damp and Waterproof Workers, has a long name and a short membership. Once upon a time, when it carried a hundred and sixty names on its roll, the available amount of composition roof, damp and waterproof work did not reach around, so the union "closed its charter," which means that it received no new members, which in turn means that an outside roofer coming to San Francisco would have to change his trade if he wanted to make a living, as no San Francisco contractor is allowed, on pain of strike and boycott, to employ any man not a member of Local No. 25. Well, the slump in building continued, roofing work was scarce and as a result many members of Local No. 25 moved away or went into other trades until, so the contractors allege, the union had a membership of eighty men, and its charter was still closed.

Furthermore, the roofers' union recognizes no apprentices. Its members are receiving six dollars for eight hours and they appreciate a good thing when they have it. But of course there are times when the union can't supply all the men needed on urgent work. In these emergencies it allows the contractor to employ unskilled helpers and these helpers are permitted to become union members after they have had one year's practical experience at the business.

Unfortunately there is a bug in this seemingly liberal provision. Suppose that during a rush period, when every union man is employed, contractor A is allowed by the union to put on two helpers; as soon as the union crew of contractor B has finished its job, the helpers of A must be fired and the union men put in their places. The master roofers state it is impossible to hold these helpers after they have been unceremoniously deprived of their jobs a few times, and that they rarely are able to work them consecutively longer than four or five weeks. Since the union requires a full year's work as a condition of admission, it follows that the graduation of a helper into a full-fledged member of Local No. 25 must be as rare an event as the election of William Jennings Bryan.

Coming right down to cases, can you blame the members of Local No. 25 for their efforts to maintain a monopoly of all the roofing work in San Francisco? They are human, subject to the same temptations as you and I. The men believe that the work is theirs; they resent the coming of outsiders, just as the roofing contractors resent outside competition, just as the grocer and the butcher resent the opening of a new store in the same block. The only difference is that you and I and the grocer and the butcher can no more stop outside competition than we can hold back the tides.

When this Chinese wall has been built high and strong and all around the job, it gives the worker a sense of security. He is safe from the wolf; let the hungry horde prowl around outside the wall as much as it pleases, he at least is well fed and snug so long as the supply within the encircling wall holds out.

Besides engendering a feeling of security, this Chinese wall around the job at times creates something else, something different, entirely different.

For a demonstration of the protected job's by-product, let us take a hasty glance at the organized plumbers. Their pay is six dollars for eight hours except Saturdays, when work stops at high noon while wages go on until 5 p. m. In San Francisco no plumber can work unless he is a member of the union. The union used to allow a few apprentices provided they were sons of plumbers, but now even the son of a union member has a hard time to learn his father's trade—at least in San Francisco. The apprentice list is full. A rank outsider has as much chance to break into the San Francisco plumbers' union as Morgan has of taking tea with the Kaiser. It can't be done. They have dugouts and bombproofs within the wall.

To point out the result of the plumbers' fortified union position, a contractor relates how it cost him fifty-four dollars to have two pieces of five-inch pipe threaded and a valve put on.

The two length of pipe were at a building under construction. To thread them, it required the services of four plumbers at six dollars a day to load the pipe on a wagon. Under the union rules the four plumbers rode on the wagon to the machine shop, unloaded the precious pipe with their own "fair" hands, stood around taking the rest cure while the job of threading was under way, reloaded the pipe and conveyed it triumphantly back to the job, certain that no "unfair" hands had desecrated the material. This process required a day and twenty-four dollars.

The valve had to be put on by a steamfitter. The business agent of the plumbers' union insisted, however, that no common ordinary steamfitter should be allowed to perform the crowning ceremony of turning the water on. Only a plumber could adequately go through with this sacred rite. So for two days and a half the plumber drew seventy-five cents an hour waiting for the steamfitter to get through. When at last the valve was put on, the plumber solemnly tested it, picked up his tools and departed with the steamfitter.

Well, why not? It isn't any worse than the typographical union, which insists that advertisements which have already appeared in last week's paper shall be set up, proofread and distributed again today. It isn't any worse than the action of the employer who sweats his labor, who speeds his men to the limit of endurance and squeezes wages to the subsistence limit. They all do it because of the inherent selfishness of human nature; they take advantage of the other fellow because they have the power to do it, because the one who is injured takes the gaff and says nothing for fear of even greater injury.

Selfishness, of course, lies at the bottom of the almost universal trade union practice of sharply limiting the number of apprentices, except in so far as the entire apprenticeship system is a survival of the Middle Ages. A hundred and fifty or two hundred years ago the shoemaker remained a shoemaker until the end of his days. He might become a laborer, but he could not enter the gild of the weavers, nor could a blacksmith become a mason. It was against the law. The craft gilds, masters as well as men, were protected against outside competition, and this prerogative was handed down from father to son irrespective of fitness. Craft monopolies and trade monopolies were the warp and the woof of the social fabric, each monopoly recognized and protected by law. Naturally progress and advance were impossible under a system which killed incentive, so impossible that Adam Smith in his "Wealth of Nations" scathingly denounced the gild practice of hereditary apprenticeship with its resultant monopoly wages and profits.

But the habit dies hard. A strict limitation of the number of apprentices is today one of the cardinal tenets of American trade unionism. If the American unions had the power generally to enforce their regulations throughout the United States, in fifteen years practically every one of the skilled trades would be so woefully short of mechanics that industrial expansion would be impossible. Also, conditions of this character would not only kill American export trade, but throw the home market wide open to foreign goods.

Take the printers, for instance. In San Francisco the typographical union permits the employment of one apprentice for every five journeymen printers in the smaller shops. Large shops, however, are restricted to a maximum of three youngsters, and even upon this limited number the union looks with disfavor. Furthermore, the average boss hires a journeyman to set type and objects if the journeyman "wastes his time" instructing an apprentice.

The carpenters' union officially limits the number of apprentices to one for every five journeymen; the machinists adhere to the same ratio; the ship caulkers do likewise. The bricklayers' union shows marked preference to the sons of bricklayers and, in order to keep the Chinese wall around its particular monopoly at the proper height, the by-laws of the San Francisco local state that no new member shall be admitted, even if he has the price, unless two-thirds of the union members present at the business meeting give their assent. I have not access to the minutes of the bricklayers' union, but it stands to reason that the members would have to be more than human if they did not cast their ballots in strict accord with what they consider their vital economic interest. That clause obviously was not put into the by-laws to make it easier for new members to join. A rush of volunteers is the last thing the bricklayers' union desires, a remark which applies with equal force to any other line of productive human endeavor, be it railroading or peanut peddling.

It would be wearisome to recite in detail the exact limitations and restrictions placed by organized labor upon the number of apprentices; practically every union has such restrictions and does not hesitate to say so. They are frank about it. They want to keep the number of potential competitors for the job as low as possible. The boilermakers, the gas and electric-fixture hangers, the electricians, the structural-iron worker, the stone cutters, the tile layers, the plasterers, the lathers, the steamfitters, the shipwrights and dozens of other organizations endeavor directly or indirectly to keep down the number of holes in the wall surrounding their trades. They would like to bar apprentices entirely for a number of years as the plumbers' union and the carpet lay-

ers of San Francisco did, but few of them have the power thus openly to strengthen their monopoly. Instead they try to make the employment of apprentices unprofitable by fixing a rate of pay often so high that the learner, spoiling much material and many tools, becomes an expensive luxury rather than a source of profit to the employer. Once upon a time the indentured apprentice worked seven years for his keep and in addition paid cold cash for the right to learn a legally protected craft; nowadays organization, not the law, offers the obstruction, and the organization makes the employer pay through the nose for the privilege of teaching his trade to growing boys.

Seeing a future competitor in him, the average union mechanic cherishes no paternal affection for the apprentice; he does not put himself out to advise, guide or correct the boy. Neither is the employer, under present conditions, deeply interested in the progress and proficiency of the budding craftsman; he has to pay the apprentice when he spoils more than he can produce, and the union compels him to raise the boy's pay every six months. Nor has he much choice in the selection of applicants; he may fire a boy who shows himself to be totally unfitted for the trade, but as a rule the union will not allow him to take on a new boy in place of the unsuitable one. Since the union will not and the employer cannot guide the learner effectively, it follows that the apprentice is frequently running errands or a machine instead of learning the intricacies of the trade.

Employers and union men both agree that the apprenticeship system in its present form is inadequate, unsatisfactory, productive of much friction and of mighty small results in all-around skill and efficiency. Both sides desire something different, but they are far apart in their ideas as to the proper solution of the difficulty.

The general dissatisfaction with the apprentice system exists, but it is difficult to tell how sincerely either side desires a radical, thorough improvement in conditions. Between the two sides, each seeing only its own immediate and temporary advantage, the boy who desires to become a skilled mechanic has an exceedingly hard time, and his difficulties increase in proportion to the strength and effectiveness of the trade unions. In communities where organized labor is weak the employer tries to obtain as much boy labor for as little money as he can and to hold this boy labor below men's wages as long as possible. In communities dominated by the unions, like San Francisco, a large part of the adolescent population is denied the right to a trade and driven either to casual employment in unskilled work or forced to leave the community. Even when the boy succeeds in dodging the union-made barrier, if he enrolls in an industrial

school and there obtains a thorough training in both the practice and the theory of a skilled trade, his troubles are not over. For years the graduates of the plumbing department of a San Francisco trade school—not operated for profit—have been barred from employment in their home town by union regulations and have been forceed to go elsewhere in order to make a living.

Boys who had learned the difficult trade of the pattern maker in San Francisco were confronted by similar conditions. The pattern makers' union, anxious to protect its members' jobs, declined in any way to recognize the training given in trade schools. No matter how proficient the young man might be, he could not go to work in a San Francisco shop unless he started at the bottom of the ladder in company with the newest apprentice —if he got the chance. He might not. The pattern makers' union limits the number of apprentices to one for every five journeymen, and this restriction might force the trade-school graduate to wait for months and longer before he could find a chance to begin learning the trade all over again.

The Smith-Hughes Act is now in operation. Under its provisions several million dollars of federal money are available each year to those states which will appropriate an equal amount for real vocational training. The means are now at hand to create at least the foundation for a new system of industrial education to take the place of the obsolete, inadequate apprenticeship method. With the funds now available it will be possible to establish well equipped vocational schools with ample facilities to turn out skilled, all-around mechanics thoroughly familiar with the theory and practice of their craft; it will now be possible to establish courses alternating between factory and school, to coördinate the training given in either place, to give every ambitious boy a *real* chance to familiarize himself with the intricacies of every phase of his trade.

The application of the funds available under this new law will, if wisely and efficiently expended and not used for the extension merely of the manual training courses, increase the number of skilled mechanics. Will the trade unions endeavor to dam this stream of potential competitors? Does the Smith-Hughes Act mean so heavy an increase in the number of skilled workers that the very existence of the labor unions is threatened?

If the latter assumption is true, organized labor certainly would be justified in fighting to the last ditch against the application of the new educational law. Will it be necessary to make this fight?

Which question brings us to a consideration of the purpose and effect of that trade union policy which expresses itself in the limitation of the number of apprentices, in the "closed charter,"

in initiation fees running as high as seventy dollars, in short to organized labor's efforts at monopoly. What else are these restrictions, found in the constitution and the by-laws of almost every union, than an effort to monopolize the job?

Is it possible to monopolize the work of any industry so as to give the union mechanics engaged therein the maximum wages, the minimum hours and steady, continuous employment? Theoretically it is possible to bring about such a condition by complete organization of the craft, together with rigid limitation of apprentices and a hog-tight fence against new union members except via the apprenticeship route. Suppose every skilled craft in the country were completely organized and carried out the regulations described. We would than have reproduced one feature of the medieval gild system with all its sins of monopoly, stagnation and lack of progress; and outside this system we would have a vast army of boys, all of whom would either have to become merchants, professional men or day laborers. Yet the system here outlined is the nebulous ideal ever inciting American organized labor to fresh efforts to bring about its realization.

CHAPTER V

THE UNIONS' FAMILY FEUDS

It is not the "closed shop" that arouses the ire of the average fair-minded employer. It's the abuse of the "closed shop," the endless, irritating succession of pin pricks caused by irksome, often stupid and always arbitrary union regulations that "get his goat," speaking in the vernacular. To illustrate:

The unionized building mechanics of San Francisco will not handle "unfair" lumber. Unless it bears the stamp of the millmen's union, they will not touch it. If they do, they are fined by the Building Trades' Council, and the fear of this fine is a most effective deterrent.

A contractor building a structure against a time limit ordered two loads of lumber from a union mill. When it arrived on the job, the carpenters quit. All work came to a standstill because the lumber was without the union stamp. Though the contractor produced the bill, though he telephoned to the mill, though it was abundantly proven that the lumber was manufactured in a union shop, the mechanics declined to touch it. It had to be reloaded, hauled back to the mill, unloaded, stamped, reloaded a second time and hauled to the job again.

The union millman had forgotten to stamp the material. It was clearly the union's fault, yet the union declined to pay for the extra expense or to compensate the contractor for the loss of valuable time. All it did was to pay for the hauling one way.

This happened a few years ago, but the contractor still gets red in the face when he speaks of it. An instance trivial in itself has made of this man a lifelong opponent of the closed shop.

It's the little things in life that aggravate, that set the teeth on edge and cause tempers to break. I have formed an intense personal dislike of an acquaintance who roared with laughter when I had to chase my hat bowling along before a stiff breeze: some day I'm going to get even with him. Cast-iron toast has spoiled many a promising, sunshiny day and the stubborn collar button will be found at the bottom of many a divorce decree. In the industrial world the role of the collar button is played with great success by the jurisdictional disputes of the trade unions. The nature of this industrial irritant can best be shown by a few concrete examples.

In refinishing an open-air cigar stand the contractor found that the job would not look well unless a pillar opposite the stand was ornamented with a marble base to match the base of the

cigar counter. He had his union carpenter take the measurements and sent over to a union shop for four small marble panels. The panels came with the holes drilled through them. Shortly after them came the business agent of the marble workers' union. He caught the union carpenter in the act of fastening the first panel to the pillar and stopped him with the threat of a citation to appear before the Building Trades' Council. The operation of screwing the panel to the woodwork of the pillar was not carpenter's work. Under union regulations it had to be performed by a member of the marble worker's union who, under the rules of his union, had to have the assistance of a helper in the arduous task of driving eight screws—at a cost of at least fifty cents per screw.

The same contractor was putting in a new store front. The tile in the entrance was laid by a member of the tile layers' union, but when this tile layer reached for a slab of marble three inches wide to lay it between the tiles and the edge of the sidewalk the business agent of the marble workers' union once more appeared on the scene. Afraid of a fine, the union tile layer notified his employer that he could not put down the marble sill, whereupon the contractor came in person, mixed the cement, spread it and pressed the marble slab down into it, flush with the sidewalk, the entire operation requiring less than ten minutes. Of course the contractor's love for the union shop reached fever heat when the business agent protested against the work so vociferously that a crowd gathered to watch the fun; of course this contractor tries with all his might to perpetuate union conditions in his shop.

While putting in new plate glass partitions the contractor found that two or three strips of patented metal molding, used to hold the glass in place, were not of the exact length necessary. A boy with a hack saw could have trimmed the molding to the required sizes in five minutes, but the cabinetmakers—all good union men—unanimously refused to tackle the job. It was a metal worker's task, they averred; if they undertook to do it, they would lay themselves wide open to a fine of twenty dollars. So the contractor had to send for a metal worker, who traveled six miles coming and going to spend five minutes in actual labor. The contractor paid the bill.

Similarly the union glaziers insist that on interior work in which hardwood molding is used to hold plate glass in place, they and not the cabinetmakers or carpenters are entitled to the handling of the molding. In several instances the union glaziers have put the moldings on, only to have the union cabinetmakers do the work over again so as to have it right.

It must not be inferred that the men themselves invariably insist upon the strict enforcement of these medieval rules, sur-

vival of an age when the functions of each craft gild were sharply and precisely delimited by law. The union mechanic has no desire needlessly to injure the employer upon whose prosperity the steadiness of his employment largely depends. But the union mechanic under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Building Trades' Council is afraid; he knows that the ruling body of the Council is composed of the business agents whose jobs depend upon their ability to create as much work as possible for their constituents, to give incessant proof of their activity and watchfulness. No man likes to part with five, ten, twenty or fifty dollars for the violation of a rule even if the rule is foolish. Yet union men will incur the risk of a fine or the loss of the union card if they think they can hide their "crime" from the business agent's lynx eyes. A few months ago a San Francisco bank rearranged its main office. The carpenters were perfectly able to unscrew the metal lattice work of the tellers' cages, to move it to the new location and screw it on again, but they were afraid to do it. They could move the wooden counters, but the moving of the lattice work "belonged" to the metal workers' union. Yet they did it—after the windows had been covered with a coat of whitewash to hide their evil doings from the business agent of the ornamental ironworkers' union.

Years ago a fair amount of standard store and office fixtures was manufactured in San Francisco; today that line of industry is practically dead. No work is undertaken except special contract jobs. High wages did not kill the business; high wages and reasonable hours rarely kill any business. The instances quoted above supply the clue to the real cause of this industry's slow and painful demise.

Some years ago most of the piles used in San Francisco bay were protected with a tar composition and covered with a felt paper held down by redwood battens, the work being done in a San Francisco plant employing fourteen to twenty laborers at $3.50 to $4 a day. It was only a small industry, so small that the unions overlooked it for quite a while. At last it occurred to the roofers', damp and waterproof workers' union that its jurisdiction extended over this insignificant pile-treating trade. It asked for and obtained the jurisdiction. Fifteen union roofers at six dollars a day were to replace the fifteen non-union laborers. But the shifting of jobs did not take place. Instead the business of protecting submerged piles lifted itself by the boot straps and went in a body to the open-shop creosoting plants of Seattle. No union roofers obtained employment, but fifteen laborers found themselves without jobs and the demand for redwood battens dwindled.

Of course this is a small affair, too small to attract public notice except among the persons directly affected, but it illus-

trates the tendency of all industry to go where costs are lowest. Because of this tendency the strongly unionized community must see its industrial development retarded or checked entirely, as in San Francisco before the war created abnormal conditions, unless union leaders and union men coöperate with the employers to offset the higher wages and shorter hours by greater efficiency. And the cause of efficiency is not aided by the efforts of rival unions to obtain for their members as much as possible of the work lying in the twilight zone between two crafts. The fight of the carpenters and the plasterers' unions over the nailing-up of the staff work during the construction of the San Francisco exposition supplies a classic example of the trouble, the cost and the friction created by the jurisdictional squabbles among the unions.

A great many of the plaster ornaments were made on the bench. When this staff work was ready to be nailed in position, both the carpenters and the plasterers claimed the right to do the nailing. Though the contractors favored the carpenters, they agreed to a compromise under the provisions of which each craft was to do half the nailing. There were several reasons why the contractors favored the carpenters. In the first place, they received $4.50 for eight hours, whereas the plasterers received $6; in the second place, the carpenter's familiarity with saw, hammer and nails enabled him to do a great deal more of the work than the plasterer could accomplish; in the third place, the union carpenters were perfectly willing to accept a common laborer earning $2.50 or $3 a day as a helper, whereas the rules of the plasterers' union required the services of a union hod carrier at $4 a day.

During the period when each craft did half the nailing, bystanders used to await the change from carpenter to plasterer with intense interest. It was as good as a show. When the plasterer arrived on the scaffolding and found staff work ready to be placed, he beckoned to the hod carrier. The hod carrier gravely lowered the staff work to the ground, took it out of the sling, walked around it, put it back into the sling and hoisted it to the top of the scaffold again. The plasterer insisted upon this performance. His union was not on good terms with the hod-carriers' union. He wasn't going to be caught napping. The regulations of his union did not allow him to handle any material unless it was prepared by a union hod carrier. If he nailed up material hoisted to the scaffold by a carpenter's helper, he violated the union "law" and might be fined. So he played safe and had the union hod carrier hoist the staff work down and up again before he would touch it.

Unfortunately the fifty-fifty arrangement between the plasterers and the carpenters did not last. The plasterers wanted it

all. They felt aggrieved and complained. Even to the annual convention of the American Federation of Labor did they carry their grievance, and when the court of last resort turned them down, they struck. Every union plasterer in San Francisco, in and out of the exposition, was ordered to quit work because of the dispute with the carpenters over the division of the task.

Whereupon the labor world was shocked by a most strange phenomenon.

The San Francisco Building Trades' Council, mainstay of organized labor in the Far West, actually and actively helped the contractors' association in the importation of strikebreakers to crush the rebellious plasterers' union.

The strike was accompanied by the usual symptoms. Strikebreakers, even though they had the official support of the San Francisco unions, were slugged, beaten, sandbagged, kicked and chased off the jobs by the striking union plasterers. Only when the family feud threatened to disrupt the hiterto unbroken ranks of the Building Trades' Council was the dispute settled.

The employers were not at fault. They were willing to and did fulfil every condition imposed by organized labor, yet they suffered because two unions did not have enough solidarity and common sense amicably to agree upon the division of work claimed by both.

Before proceeding to the consideration of the broader aspect and consequences of jurisdictional disputes among rival labor organizations, let us tarry for a moment to take a look into the practices of the San Francisco roofers' union.

The contractors allege that this union has "closed its charter," that is, it accepts no new members, be they with or without a union card; that it bars all apprentices; that it practices restriction of output even though journeymen are paid $6 and gang foremen $7.50 for eight hours. The employers complain furthermore of a union rule which compels them to send out a foreman plus a journeyman on any repair job, even if the trouble is caused merely by a small leak which could be fixed in an hour by an apprentice. This roofers' union also is exceptionally particular when it comes to questions of jurisdiction. It will not allow the profane hands of non-members to desecrate any part of the material needed by union roofers. Its rules provide that none but roofers must hoist the material to the top. Thus, if a contractor desires to hoist roofing material to the top of a building before removing the hoisting machinery, he cannot employ his union laborers for the work. He must call in union roofers at six dollars a day to perform the skilled labor of wheeling gravel, tar and roofing felt in and out of the hoist. Thus San Francisco roofs are exceptionally expensive, the dry climate not-

withstanding, and the relations between the roofing contractors and the union are fully as cordial and harmonious as the feeling Governor Hughes harbors for the glorious state of California.

Sometimes the actions of the business agents show so little foresight, display such complete disregard of the inevitable consequences to the affected industries, to the union men themselves, that these actions appear to be childishly mischievous. Take the case of the San Francisco sheet metal workers, for instance.

Finding business slack, the owner of an establishment handling ornamental iron work cast about for a new line. He discovered that no steel lockers of any kind were manufactured in the Far West, investigated thoroughly, decided that he could compete with Eastern manufacturers, ordered automatic machines to stamp out the sides and doors and set out on a still hunt for orders. San Francisco was just completing a large new car barn. He put in a bid on the lockers and obtained the contract at $4.70, the next lowest bidder, an Eastern firm, asking $4.74 per locker. Competition was stiff, but the San Francisco man, having no freight on the manufactured product to pay, figured that his bid would enable him to make a small profit.

He had figured without the unions.

In the first place, the business agent of the structural iron workers came around and claimed the task of making the locker frames for the members of his union. The owner of the plant employed union housesmiths exclusively, paying them four dollars a day. They were fully competent to do the work, but because the angle irons of the frame exceeded a certain thickness, he was forced to hire structural ironworkers at six dollars. Nor could the door and sides of the lockers be made by his own men; they had been trained in the use of the automatic stamping machines, but they had to give way because the work "belonged" to the sheet metal workers' union who must receive five dollars and a half a day.

Still, the worst was yet to come. When Eastern firms had shipped steel lockers, manufactured by workers not nearly as well paid as those in San Francisco, into the city by the Golden Gate, the assembling and setting-up of the lockers had always been done by unskilled laborers at a cost of 30 cents per locker. In his bid the San Francisco manufacturer had based his estimate on this assembling cost. But when he started to set up his lockers in the car barn, the business agent of the sheet metal workers' union objected. The work "belonged" to the union men. The manufacturer pointed out that unskilled laborers had for years assembled steel lockers shipped in from the East; why discriminate against home industry?

Had the business agent been frank, he would have replied that the San Francisco Building Trades' Council had no earthly means to punish manufacturers in Ohio or Pennsylvania, but that it *did* have the power to make it exceedingly interesting for any San Francisco enterprise daring to disobey its mandate; he would have added that the boss had better quit arguing and put the sheet metal workers on the pay roll unless he'd like to see every man pulled out of his shop and all of his customers boycotted. But the business agent was not frank; rather he assured the manufacturer that the highly skilled, most efficient members of the sheet metal workers' union could do ever so much more and better work than mere laborers and that in the long run the employment of skilled union mechanics would turn out to be cheaper than common labor.

Was it?

With laborers it cost Eastern firms 30 cents to set up a steel locker in San Francisco; with union sheet metal mechanics it cost the San Francisco manufacturer 80 cents per locker.

To keep the shop and his old employees busy, this manufacturer bid on and obtained the contract for the construction of a steel raft. He was not allowed to build it; the shipbuilding unions claimed that the work was theirs and got it.

He began the manufacture of a truck attachment with his old force, whereupon he was told that his men could not be employed on the work as it fell under the jurisdiction of the machinists' union. That was the last straw, the final pin prick, the blow that killed the golden-egg goose. The manufacturer broke with the unions, told the business agents to keep out and proceeded to run an open shop. Petty annoyances, stupid arbitrary handicaps blocking his efforts to keep his force employed literally drove him into it.

Let us admit right here that perhaps the principal reason why this manufacturer objected against the pressure to employ the members of other unions was the fact that his own men worked under a union scale of wages lower than the pay of the other crafts. Yet his own men were fully competent to handle the work and more than willing to undertake it. All that was accomplished by the efforts of rival unions to crowd higher-priced mechanics into their places was a weakening of organized labor, the establishment of another open shop.

On this point—it is assuming ever greater importance on the Pacific Coast owing to the rapid industrial expansion—Sydney and Beatrice Webb, the great English trade-union authorities, write:

"If the employer, by any change of process, can bring his work within the capacity of operations of a lower grade of strength or skill, it is useless for the superior worker to resist the change."

Trouble over the division of work between rival crafts is of ancient origin. As early as 1395 the King of England had to interfere in a violent dispute between the London cobblers and "cordwainers" as to which trade should "clout old shoes and old bootes with new ledder upon the old soles, before or behind," and since then the demarcation of trade limits has been a fruitful source of loss to both English employees and English trade unions. Between 1890 and 1893 the great shipbuilding industry on the Tyne was several times brought to a complete standstill lasting months by jurisdictional disputes between the joiners and the shipwrights and the fitters and the plumbers, losses from which the affected unions did not fully recover for more than a decade.

"The Engineers (machinists) have, on different occasions quarreled on this score with the Boilermakers, the Shipwrights, the Joiners, the Brassworkers, the Plumbers and the Tinplate Workers; the Boilermakers have had their own differences with the Shipwrights, the Smiths, the Drillers and the Chippers; the Shipwrights have fought with the Caulkers, the Boat and Barge Builders, the Mast and Blockmakers and the Joiners; the Joiners themselves have other quarrels with the Mill-sawyers, the Patternmakers, the Cabinetmakers, the Upholsterers and the French Polishers; whilst trades, such as the Hammermen, the Ship Painters and the 'Red Leaders' are at war all around. Hence an employer, bound to complete a job by a given date, may find one morning his whole establishment in confusion and the most important sections of his workmen 'on strike,' not because they object to any of the conditions of employment, but because they fancy that one trade has 'encroached' on the work of another. The supposed encroachment may consist of the most trivial detail." (From "Industrial Democracy," by Sydney and Beatrice Webb.)

This condition of endless internal warfare, costly both to the employer and to the unions, has been transplanted bodily from England into the American "closed shop." It has irritated, annoyed, angered and injured more employers than the straight fights over hours and wages; it has weakened the unions, depleted their treasuries, aroused antagonism where coöperation was needed and has caused many times the loss in wages than the sum total of the work in dispute. It has done more than this. Perhaps more than any other factor jurisdictional disputes have enabled dishonest, crooked union officials to misuse their power, to blackmail employers, to transmute their official position into private gain.

There was Sam Parks, business agent and boss of the New York housesmiths' and bridge builders' union. Sam Parks rules

the four thousand members of the union as though they were his serfs. He called strikes and called them off again, spent the union funds without consulting anyone; he gave no accounting, no reason or justification for his actions and, because he happened to come into power during a period when wages the world over were rising rapidly among organized and unorganized workers alike, he managed to keep himself in power by pointing to the increased wages as the result of his personal efforts.

In 1901 Sam Parks spent $40,000 of the union's money without rendering an accounting; in 1902 more than $60,000 was paid out on his order in a similar manner, but these amounts constituted merely a part of the sums at his disposal. A typical instance of his working methods is supplied by the experience of the Hecla Iron Works. Parks approached the officers of the concern with a demand for money in one hand and the threat of a strike in the other. He was thrown out, whereupon he immediately called a strike that threw twelve hundred men out of work and cost the concern fifty thousand dollars. The firm finally surrendered and paid Parks two thousand dollars, whereupon he ordered the men to go back to work. They went. At his command, issued without consulting anyone, without a vote, without warning, they abandoned their work like obedient sheep, and like sheep they returned at his order. In dozens of instances the members of this union, obeying implicitly, without question, enabled Sam Parks to blackmail their employers, and the easiest, most common pretext on which to call a strike was the ever-present jurisdictional dispute.

The Sam Parks affair is fifteen years old. How about conditions right now?

In 1916 the C. A. Carson Company was erecting a building in Cleveland, Ohio. When it was time to pour the concrete on the first floor, trouble started. Three business agents descended upon the contractors. Union lathers were setting the metal forms for the concrete and the sheet metal workers claimed the task as theirs. It was not a question of hours or wages; full union conditions—the "closed shop"—prevailed on the job. To avoid trouble, the contractor declared his willingness to take down the forms put up by the lathers, to have the taking-down done by union sheet-metal workers or, if the lathers did it, to pay the cost into the treasury of the sheet metal workers' union.

Did the business agents agree to this eminently fair proposition of a contractor anxious to avoid trouble? They did not. They refused to commit themselves, but when the contractor poured concrete into the forms placed by union lathers, a strike was called. Every union man employed on the building was ordered to quit and walked out.

The contractor alleges that the owner of the building settled the trouble by paying two business agents a total of two thousand dollars. When the first thousand was paid, according to the contractor's story, the union men meekly went back to work, regardless of the jurisdictional dispute.

The John Gill & Sons Company put up a business structure in Cleveland late in 1915. F. A. Collins, the firm's superintendent, under oath declared that shortly before Christmas union labor officials asked him to "kick in" on a Christmas present. He was giving fifty dollars for the grafters. They laughed at him.

"My, that's only cigarette money for one day," declared one of them. They told the superintendent very frankly that they wanted at least two thousand dollars, one per cent of the contract price, according to the "union scale" they said prevailed in Chicago and New York.

When the contractors refused to be held up, seven strikes were called on the building, the carpenters' strike lasting seven weeks. Hundreds of workmen, ignorant of the graft, obediently sacrificed many weeks' wages, construction was delayed, the cause of trade unionism was trampled into the mire that a few rogues and scoundrels might profit.

Every one of these seven strikes was ostensibly based on a handy jurisdictional dispute.

More than a dozen contractors testified before a jury that they had been blackmailed out of sums totaling $75,000 to settle strikes, called on account of jurisdictional disputes. Things in the Cleveland building trades became so bad in the spring of 1917, what with graft, internal scraps, broken agreements and incessant demands artificially stirred up by so-called labor leaders for their own private benefit that the employers became alarmed, took the bull by the horns and locked out practically every union man in the building trades. Two weeks later the Building Trades' Council through its representatives signed an agreement in which practically every demand of the employers was conceded. Twenty-four hours after this action, Charles Smith, business agent of the Building Trades' Council, was indicted on a charge of blackmail. He was tried and convicted by a jury in May.

The sentiment in favor of the "open shop"—which always tends to become a strictly non-union shop—is growing rapidly. When peace comes, when the hundred of thousands of laborers now being rushed into the skilled and semi-skilled trades are laid off, forming a great reservoir of potential strikebreakers, the path of the unions will be hard and rocky. Right now is the time to remove the many senseless irritants that continually cause employers to curse the unions. Close to the head of the list

stands the jurisdictional dispute, the irritant par excellence, the handiest bludgeon of the grafting union official. In Cleveland the building trades' union have agreed under no circumstances to quit work on account of jurisdictional disputes; instead, they have agreed to submit the family quarrel to a permanent conciliation board whose decisions shall be final.

CHAPTER VI

THE UNION'S MAILED FIST

A few months ago I called, unannounced, on a San Francisco manufacturer to discuss the labor problem in general and the limitation of apprentices by the union in particular. The moment the subject was broached Jones—that isn't his real name—arose, went to the open door leading into the shop and carefully closed it.

"Now we can talk," he said, moving his chair closer and lowering his voice.

During the discussion the union rule limiting the number of apprentices to one for every five journeymen was questioned.

"I'll show it to you in black and white," he said. "I've got a copy of the constitution and by-laws right here." He rummaged through a number of drawers. "No, it's in the desk out in the shop. Wait just a moment. I'll get it for you."

It took him five minutes to make the round trip, even though the distance was barely thirty feet. When he reached the old-fashioned bookkeeper's desk, he did not pick out the little book and return with it. He pretended to fill out a number of blank forms. Apparently failing to see the one he wanted, he hunted through the desk, removed the union book from its hiding place, glanced cautiously around, slipped it beneath the blanks, pretended to be busy a while longer, rolled up the papers with the book on the inside and came back.

Once more he closed the door. Moving his chair alongside of mine he unrolled the papers between our knees, glanced around again apprehensively and, still holding the book at arm's length in such a position that it was completely hidden from view between our knees, opened it and triumphantly pointed out the particular by-law in question.

This manufacturer took these elaborate precautions because he was afraid of the union men working for him.

Why this fear?

Before I had a chance to ask the question, the answer came.

"We're going to move across the bay pretty soon," Jones explained. "The building is almost completed and a lot of automatic machinery is on the way. We're going to specialize on some big contracts that will keep the new plant busy till the end of nineteen eighteen without a single new order. No, we wouldn't try to do it over here. We need fifty more men and the union can't supply them. Even if union men were available, we'd have to pay the full union rate for feeding automatic machines,

for work that a man who has never seen a lathe or a drill press can learn in two months. We'll take our best mechanics along, pick up some good clean raw material in the country and build up an organization on the open-shop basis in the new plant."

"Why don't you do it over here in San Francisco?" I asked.

Jones shook his head vehemently.

"It can't be done," he replied. "Too many alleys, little side streets and dark corners around here. Too many of our men would get beaten up. We are out in the open on the other side, away from the union crowd—and we get better police protection."

Because this manufacturer feared that the union would beat up and slug his men, because he feared that his employees on their way to and from work would be attacked and injured, because he expected that the authorities would fail to give him adequate protection should he operate on an open-shop basis, San Francisco lost an establishment affording a livelihood to seventy-five workers and their families. Yet this manufacturer had no personal experience with labor troubles in the citadel of American trade-unionism. He based his decision solely on the experience of others.

Was his decision right? Do San Francisco labor unions really employ the blackjack, the gas pipe and the brass knuckle as an integral part of their armament in industrial disputes?

Perhaps a few facts will throw a ray of light upon their practices.

The union press feeders employed in the San Francisco printing plants struck a few years ago, forcing the pressmen to go with them. Neither the pressmen not the press feeders were starving. The pressmen averaged better than $30 a week; the feeders received a minimum of $16 a week for work that could be performed as well and for less pay by boys and women. They had the eight-hour day. Wages, hours and conditions were at least as good as the best prevailing in the trade anywhere in the United States. The employers were entirely willing to concede the closed shop, to admit none but union members; they had no desire to precipitate a fight; they had no inclination to "bust the union." They had proven their willingness to give their press-room forces a square deal. Every printing plant worked under full union conditions and was entirely willing to continue working under these conditions.

Negotiations failing to bring about an agreement, the press feeders struck. Non-union men took their places. What happened?

Picket lines were established by the union in front of every plant. Non-union pressmen and feeders were assaulted, beaten,

slugged, kicked on their way to and from work, not in a few isolated instances but literally in scores of instances. Conditions grew so bad that the employers did not dare allow the non-union men to walk unguarded on the public streets. So they hired taxicabs and had them ride to and from work in state. Policemen were stationed at the plants mornings and evenings; policemen likewise were instructed to protect the non-union workers as they sprinted from the taxicabs into their homes. Even these precautions did not always prove effective. In broad daylight

A victim of the "wrecking crew"

on crowded business streets men who had taken the places of the strikers were caught as they left the automobiles, slugged, knocked down, kicked in the face and their ribs broken by the heels of their assailants.

This private war was carried on by union labor not merely for a few weeks or a month. The slugging and kicking lasted for almost a year. More than a hundred cases of assault were recorded; more than three score of the victims required medical attendance; a dozen of them had to be taken to hospitals suffering from fractured skulls, broken noses, internal injuries. And during these twelve months when the "wrecking crew" operated with sneering disregard of concealment only thirty arrests were

made, only five of the assailants were convicted. As to the punishment meted out to the convicted assailants, that is still another story.

Remember, these assaults were totally unprovoked. The employing printers did not hire armed guards or professional gun men; they did not evict starving strikers from company houses; they had not refused to recognize or deal with the union. On the contrary, they continued to operate strictly union shops except in the pressrooms. They were not trying to reduce wages or increase hours. The principal issue was the refusal of the press feeders to agree to arbitrate all disputes during the life of the proposed agreement, plus an attempt of the union to force more members than were actually needed onto the employers' payrolls.

The private war levied by the press feeders' union against the San Francisco printing establishments lasted a year. Had the police department and the courts really tried to stop it, had swift punishment been meted out to men caught in the crime of assault, it would not have lasted a month.

They are still talking in awed tones of the great San Francisco teamsters' strike sixteen years ago when the teamsters' union established a private jail in its headquarters, when steel bars were used to break the wrists of non-union men and pitched battles were fought in the streets. But it is not necessary to go back to the teamsters' or the car men's strikes for the red blossoms of terrorism. In 1916 the stevedores and longshoremen struck. The Secretary of Labor at Washington, himself a union man, vigorously denounced the strike as a plain, unjustifiable violation of contract. The stevedores were not starving. They were receiving the highest wages paid for similar work anywhere in the world. They could not plead exploitation and hunger in justification of their tactics. They abolished municipal, state and federal law on the San Francisco waterfront and substituted their own rules. They put a complete stop to the movement of goods from and to the docks, raised a barrier so effective that the United States government had to have a "permit" from union officials to get its shipments through the picket lines.

Fear, the fear of bodily injury, was the material out of which the barrier was built. Fear of blackjack, brass knuckles and gas pipe paralyzed the waterfront. After a few men trying to move needed goods from the docks had been beaten up, the strikers were left in supreme control. They ruled the waterfront, made their own laws and enforced them. A thousand men terrorized a city of half a million—until the half million decided that things had gone far enough.

The experience of San Francisco with violence in industrial disturbances is not extraordinary. On the contrary, it is typical

of occurrences throughout the country, only more so. The only difference between San Francisco and the rest of the country is psychological. From the earliest days San Francisco as a community has displayed radical tendencies, has sympathized with the efforts of the worker to improve his lot and has translated this sympathy into action. The San Francisco employers have never been union haters; almost from the day of the city's birth they have been ready and willing to adjust wages, hours and con-

For almost a year San Francisco master printers were obliged to carry their non-union employees back and forth in taxicabs, yet over a hundred of them were slugged and beaten by strikers and pickets

ditions of work through collective bargaining. In any discussion of the tactics and methods of trade-unionism this fact should always be kept in mind.

San Francisco did not *have* to pay the highest average wages in the country, did not *have* to concede the closed shop in almost every industry. Had the employers been so minded they could have broken the back of unionism with no greater effort than Los Angeles did. Had they been willing to fight for it as hard as did Portland and Seattle, they could have had the open shop with its lower wage scale and cheaper labor cost. But the San Francisco employers did not choose to make the fight. They had the

wealth, the power and the backbone to crush trade-unionism, but they did not use it. Only when the demands of the unions became so extreme that the union leaders themselves opposed them did San Francisco capital strike back as in 1892 and in 1901. Even then the employers did not continue the fight after the immediate ends had been gained. Had it not been for the liberal attitude of the employers and of the community as a whole union labor never could have reached the dominant position it has occupied for twenty years. A typical example of the attitude of San Francisco employers toward union labor is supplied by the Pacific Gas & Electric Company, whose labor policy has been guided for nearly a generation by the general manager, John A. Britton.

The general manager thoroughly believed in the efficacy of the square deal. It never occurred to him to deny the right of the company's employees to organize, nor did he ever refuse to negotiate with the representatives of the unions. During the period when the corporation was extending its service over the heart of central California, when one street-car, electric, gas or water system after the other was acquired, he never lifted a finger to stop the activities of the union organizers among the new employees. In the thirteen years preceding 1913 the hours of the corporation's artisans and mechanics were reduced twenty-five per cent and the wages increased more than fifty per cent without a single strike, solely by mutual agreement following negotiations.

In 1913 the unions listened to the loud voices of professional malcontents. Instead of continuing the old policy of having each craft make a separate contract with the corporation, they organized a Light and Power Council with which all the unions concerned in the generation and distribution of electricity and gas became affiliated. Through this Council the individual unions carried on the negotiations for new agreements.

An understanding concerning the contracts with the gas workers, the machinists, the boilermakers, the firemen and oilers was reached without difficulty. Only the electrical workers' union made trouble. It insisted upon two or three working rules which the company refused to concede, considering them arbitrary, unreasonable and uncalled-for. A deadlock ensued, whereupon Manager Britton offered to submit the points in dispute with the electricians to a board of arbitration. The Council's representatives declined arbitration and, a few hours after the final conference, called a general strike of all the crafts to enforce the demands of the electricians.

More than seventeen hundred men out of three thousand answered the call, but the company's 325,000 consumers barely knew that a strike was going on. The wise and liberal policy of

the general manager brought its own reward. He had consistently filled the positions of responsibility in the office, the shops and the technical departments with the most promising men in the lower ranks, and these erstwhile privates, many of them former union members, at once hauled out their overalls and kept the wheels turning.

The corporation's labor record was clean. It had dealt fairly with the unions, had paid them the highest wages in the United States, had granted them the closed shop, had arrived at a complete understanding with all the unions among its employees except the electricians and it was willing to submit its differences with this trade to arbitration. This union of electricians, by the way, was an "outlaw" organization without affiliation with the American Federation of Labor. When it declined to arbitrate, the American Federation of Labor saw its chance, sent a representative to confer with the company and signed an agreement to supply union electricians under union conditions.

When this contract was signed, the unions of central California, practically all of them affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, proclaimed a boycott against the public-utility company and declared it to be "unfair" to organized labor, because it employed union electricians supplied by the American Federation of Labor.

The boycott, though, was merely a minor weapon. The plants of the company were picketed, assaults in force were made upon them by strikers, hundreds of employees were assailed and beaten, wires were cut, towers of transmission lines were dynamited. When the strike had finally run its course, the record showed that in 770 separate cases employees of the property of the company had been attacked, that 109 union members had been arrested and 42 out of them tried and convicted. It was during this strike that Thomas Mooney and Warren Billings, subsequently convicted of murder following the San Francisco bomb outrage, became extremely active although they had nothing whatever to do with the controversy.

Even their fellow-workers do not escape the brass knuckle and the blackjack when the San Francisco unions strike. In 1914 San Francisco Local No. 66 of the plasterers' union went on strike because the Building Trades' Council had decided against its contentions in a jurisdictional dispute with the capenters' union. So the Building Trades' Council organized a new plasterers' union known as Local No. 1 and freely issued cards to plasterers coming from other points. But the outlawed members of No. 66 refused to recognize the validity of the new local's cards. On the contrary, they beat up and sent to the hospital as many of the members of No. 1 as they could reach, especially when the police

officers detailed to protect the working plasterers were withdrawn by the city administration. Nor is this an isolated phenomenon.

Warfare between rival unions is only too common for the welfare of industry and the spectacle of one set of good union men slugging another set also equipped with union cards, to the detriment of organized labor, of the employer and of the public, has been presented quite frequently. In fact when it comes to the census of broken noses, ribs and skulls, when the dead men are counted, when the property destroyed in industrial disputes during the last seven years is tabulated, it will be found that the old-line craft unions can give the I. W. W. cards, spades, big and little casino and still show a higher score.

Yet public sympathy, at least in the beginning of a strike accompanied by violence, almost invariably inclines toward the union's side. Concerning the attitude of the neutrals Secretary of War Newton D. Baker, having had ample opportunity to study the question while mayor of Cleveland, wrote two years ago: "The public sits by, blaming one side or the other on such half information or interests as it may have. . . . We do not like violence, but somehow this seems to us excusable violence, if it be not too violent. . . . Things are tided along without any clear aim or method and without any tribunal that can determine the right and wrong of the questions involved, until somebody is killed or a serious riot threatens the destruction of property. Then public sentiment momentarily clarifies; we all agree that we do not want such things, no matter what happens, and the police now have a steadied sentiment to support them; the trouble is over. . . . *The result, no matter what it is, rests upon no higher sanction than force, and therefore lacks stability and will last only until one side or the other feels strong enough to renew the struggle.*"

The public sympathizes with the under dog. Employers who desire to have public sentiment on their side—does the employer who has no such desire deserve to win?—will do well to take cognizance of this fundamental fact.

Just now the world is learning, in a sea of blood and tears, that the use of force in the settlement of international disputes produces death, chaos, famine, pestilence and dissolution. With the progress and spread of the war there is growing up a universal sentiment against the mailed fist, a cry for supernational machinery that will restrain the aggression of sovereign states and force them all to submit their grievances to boards of conciliation and arbitration. The age of Might is fast drawing to a close; Right is coming into its own. All the world is praying that the present war will be the last conflict of national interests to be settled by steel and dynamite.

By the same token, the nation is growing weary of the private wars between trade unions and employers. Even in San Francisco, the community with the widest and deepest sympathy for the objects and aims of trade-unionism, this impatience with violence, assaults and riots is making itself distinctly felt. Only a few months ago the voters of both San Francisco and Oakland, after prolonged discussion and debate, decided by their votes to prohibit picketing, the most prolific cause of violence in labor disputes. And at the beginning of the San Francisco street-car strike the public plainly showed its sympathy with the cause of the strikers; the public was entirely willing to put up with the inconvenience and wished the strikers success *provided they would obey the law and refrain from violence.*

Neither the average union man nor the average employer welcomes strikes and riots; they realize that both sides invariably lose, that in nine cases out of ten the dispute is settled by negotiations which might as well have begun before the damage was done. Perhaps it is Utopian to hope and work for an end of war, be it private or international, but the goal surely is worth the effort. Nobody expects the millennium next year; on the other hand, nobody denies that present conditions need vast improvement. Improved relations between workers and employers can be brought about. Despite superficial appearances that indicate the contrary, San Francisco offers perhaps the most promising field in the United States for these improvements—if both sides will earnestly and sincerely make the effort, if they will both abide by the rules of conduct laid down by society for its own protection.

CHAPTER VII

THE STRIKER AND LOW JUSTICE

In 1901 the San Francisco trade unionists were sore, physically and figuratively. A teamsters' strike was in progress and, when violence became "too violent," to use Secretary of War Baker's words, Mayor James D. Phelan—he represents California in the Senate now—ordered a policeman to ride on each truck and to suppress the rioters with a firm hand. The officers did their duty. Order was restored through clubs wielded impartially and vigorously. Rubbing its numerous bumps, union labor resolved that it should not happen again. In the future the San Francisco policeman's night stick must be like the clubs in the movies; though looking effective, they must hurt nobody. So union labor went into politics.

Abe Ruef, lawyer, politican and insurgent Republican, saw his chance. Putting casters under Eugene Schmitz, also a Republican, he wheeled him into the political arena as the union-labor candidate. Against the divided opposition Schmitz won; union labor plus disaffected Republican votes put him in. As mayor he appointed the members of the police commission who, in turn, appointed the chief of police who, of course, controlled the force down to the greenest patrolman from County Kerry. Since the police judges likewise had to keep their political fences in repair, the entire machinery of low justice looked to union labor as the ultimate boss.

Twice Schmitz was reëlected, the second time carrying the entire union-labor ticket, from dog catcher to the board of supervisors, to victory with him. After the interregnum caused by the graft prosecution P. H. McCarthy, president of the Building Trades' Council, filled the mayor's chair for four years and filled every available office, especially in the police department, with deserving union men. After the McCarthy dynasty came James Rolph, Junior, shipowner, fuel dealer and good fellow, for whom all classes voted with a sigh of relief, hoping to see in the executive chair a man who would steer a straight course with the welfare of the entire community as his sole beacon light. However, Mayor Rolph almost from the beginning played the game of the labor unions more wholeheartedly, more thoroughly and faithfully than either Schmitz or McCarthy, who were not compelled to give constant and substantial evidence of their devotion to the cause of organized labor.

Mayor Rolph had ample support among the eighteen supervisors, the city's administrative body. One of them was a union

musician; another one was business agent of the carpenters' union; a third one was a member of the postal clerks' union; a fourth one was the molders' union delegate to the Central Labor Council; a fifth one had been secretary of the Labor Council; two others had belonged to the bricklayers' union. Seven of the eighteen were directly affiliated with the labor unions and eleven had received the union-labor endorsement. Hence the trade unions, working through the mayor and their very own supervisors, controlled the police department, controlled the police courts, controlled a dozen departments and commissions more completely than they had dominated them under Schmitz or McCarthy.

What does labor-union control of the municipal machinery mean to the community as a whole?

Disregarding entirely the distribution of the patronage pie among the faithful, a perquisite claimed by every faction, disregarding the neglect of schools in order to fatten the payrolls of the police and fire departments, disregarding the letting of contracts to firms in good standing with the unions irrespective of lower bids, features that have been too common in administrations of all complexions, let us confine this inquiry to the fundamentals, to the protection of life and limb, to the prosecution and punishment of persons guilty of crime.

The very basis of civilized society is the security of the individual. Take away the security, and society at once reverts to the Dark Ages when the merchants had to pay tribute or travel under the protection of private armies, when private war flourished and every man's house had to be his castle. What the lack of an effective international police force, of a strong international tribunal of justice means is being demonstrated just now in the agony of a continent. To prevent such bloody chaos internally, society has everywhere built up an elaborate system of courts and peace officers charged with the duty of enforcing the law without fear or favor.

It is significant that the labor unions seized the reins of municipal power in San Francisco primarily to be able to break the law without incurring its penalties. To put it baldly, they wanted control of the police department to the end that strikers might beat up non-strikers without having to fear the peace officers' clubs. They have had control of the police department for more than fifteen years now, and the record shows that they have made full use of this control.

Look at the press feeders' strike in 1913. The employing printers had conceded the "closed shop;" the issue that brought on the strike was the refusal of the union to agree to compulsory arbitration during the life of the agreement, a condition readily accepted by their colleagues, the compositors. During the

eight months of this strike more than sixty non-union men were so badly beaten, kicked, slugged and stabbed that they required medical treatment; for eight months mobs of strikers chased the non-unionists, attacked and injured girls, broke into the homes of men who had remained at work, yet the police department barely stirred a hand and, when an arrest was made, the police judges either dismissed the defendant "for lack of evidence" or else, in case of conviction, imposed a small fine and suspended the sentence.

The police did not hesitate, though, to enforce the law vigorously against non-unionists. When during the fourth month of the trouble a crowd of thirty strikers attacked three non-union pressmen, two of them got away. The third one was knocked to the ground, kicked in the face, trampled upon and struck. Believing that his end was near, he pulled a pistol and shot into the ground, whereupon the entire crowd took to its heels.

At this juncture an officer appeared. And what did the policeman do? Did he chase the strikers? He did not. He arrested the bleeding victim, accusing him of discharging firearms within the city limits! Of course the police judge ordered his release immediately, you say. You are mistaken. The police judge held the injured man for trial; from week to week the case was continued until finally the union people consented to its dismissal.

It is not necessary, however, to go back into history to study the results of union labor's political control As a warning to other cities to beware of the poison of "class-conscious" group domination, the things that befell San Francisco during the 1917 street-car strike, are well worth national attention.

San Francisco's street cars are owned by three different interests. The bulk of the lines is operated by the United Railroads, a concern suffering from over-capitalization and from the sins of past managements. For several years the new management under the leadership of the president, J. W. Lilienthal, has been trying sincerely to rehabilitate the system and to remove the latent antagonism of the public.

Most of the cable lines are owned by an independent local concern. They do not figure in the series of events under discussion, but the municipally owned electric lines play a most important part in the story.

The municipal system was acquired when the franchises of an important line expired. It is well built, has modern equipment of the highest class and gives excellent service. *The platform men of the municipal lines are thoroughly organized, Mayor Rolph being a member of their union.* As every platform man represents a vote, it has been the policy of the management to make room for as many good union men as possible by restrict-

ing every employee to a work day of eight hours and to a six-day week, thus keeping many names on the payroll while rigidly limiting the men's earnings to $21 per week.

The United Railroads paid a sliding scale of wages from 28 to 37 cents an hour. The average rate was a little in excess of 33 cents an hour. The regular men put in ten hours in eleven and were allowed to work seven days in the week if they so desired, though this "hogging" of a run was not encouraged by the management or the extra men. The wages paid by the United Railroads were the fourth highest in the country, being exceeded only by the municipal lines of San Francisco and the privately owned street car systems in Oakland, California, and Butte, Montana. According to the U. S. Department of Labor, only ten per cent of all the platform men in the United States are paid 32 cents an hour or better, and the employees of the United Railroads exceeded this comparatively high rate.

The 1700 platform men of the United Railroads have not been organized since 1907, when their union lost a strike after the men's leaders had declined to accept the findings of the arbitration board.

Turning the controller bar, pushing the air-brake handle, ringing up nickels and punching tickets is not skilled labor. The average man with an average grammar-school education can learn the business at either end of the car in a few days, learn it sufficiently well to perform his duties acceptably, especially in a pinch. And there are always men in abundance who are anxious to find employment on street cars. It is sad but true that the world is full of untrained men making a precarious living through casual labor. Even if the pay were no higher, men of this stamp eagerly crowd into the street-car business because there is steady work three hundred and sixty-five days in the year, year in and year out. It's a life job once it is landed. In addition to the warm feeling of security, he can make better wages on the car platform, hour for hour, than he can in the open labor market. Hence the street car companies can obtain men when there is a scarcity of labor in almost every other line. During the early summer while farm and factory were vainly clamoring for help, from a hundred to a hundred and fifty applicants sought the five or six jobs that were filled by the United Railroads every Monday.

Ever since 1907 the unorganized condition of the 1700 United Railroad employees has been as gall and wormwood to the San Francisco union leaders. In 1916 Thomas Mooney, a direct-actionist and prominent figure in the molders' union, tried to precipitate a car strike with the help of his wife, Rena Mooney, and a number of municipal-railroad men, but the attempt failed miserably. On August 11, 1917, approximately ten crews of the

United Railroads abandoned their cars, created a blockade, induced sixty or seventy others to quit and repaired to the Labor Temple where M. J. McGuire, business agent of the Boilermakers' Union, of which Mayor Rolph is an honorary member, constituted himself their leader.

They made no demands upon the company that day or the next or the next. They merely paraded from the Labor Temple down the principal business street once or twice a day, jeering at the men still working and calling to them to come out. At the end of a week approximately a thousand platform men had quit, many of them because they were afraid of bodily injury should they continue at work. More than 650 platform men refused to quit and kept at work right along though their lives were in danger every hour. No demands had as yet been presented, no union had been organized and hundreds of strikebreakers were on the way.

Unofficially the men demanded the wages paid on the municipal lines, $3.50 for eight hours' work or $21 a week. Of those that quit over four hundred had been earning $21 a week and more.

For almost a week, while the strike leaders believed that the company would be unable either to find substitutes or to raise the money for their importation, the cars ran without serious molestation. But the moment the strike leaders realized that the disturbance had not bankrupted the company, that its directors had no inclination to sell the property to the city, thus increasing the number of places for good union men and dependable voters, the instant the union chiefs saw that the strike was lost, violence began.

Rioting, assaults, slugging, stoning, explosions and murder are the accompaniment of practically every street-car strike. Since the vacant places can be acceptably filled by unskilled labor, since unskilled labor in abundance is glad of the chance to get the coveted platform jobs, any street-car strike can be broken in ten days *if the operating company is left alone*. Hence the strikers invariably hurl bricks, grease the tracks, cut the wires, beat, slug and shoot in order to scare both the public and the new crews off the cars. It's an old story, but in San Francisco it had a new angle.

When a dozen Seattle police officers refused to do their sworn duty and preserve order during the street-car strike, they were immediately suspended, their badges were taken up and charges were filed against them. In New York Mayor Mitchel told the striking car men that he sympathized with them, but that life limb and property would be protected at any cost. In San Francisco Mayor Rolph praised the inactive police and accused the United Railroads of having caused the violence by importing

men to run its cars, though the police records show not one unprovoked attack by a substitute car employee upon a striker.

The mayor of San Francisco, elected to office with the help of union labor, head of the United Railroads' principal competitor, sounded the keynote; all the minor officials heard it and governed their actions accordingly. Even the daily press of San Francisco unanimously championed the cause of the strikers, echoed the mayor's cry against the imported substitutes and denounced the company for refusing arbitration.

In this connection it is significant that M. J. McGuire, as leader of the striking platform men, again and again directed public attention to the refusal of the company to submit the issue to arbitration; as business agent of the striking Boilermakers' Union Mr. McGuire, however, in the same breath refused arbitration even by the National Council of Defense on vitally urgent government war work as steadfastly as he demanded it for the street-car strikers.

When violence began, when mobs stoned the cars irrespective of the injuries inflicted on women and children, when dozens of crews were slugged and beaten, the company demanded police protection and requested that an officer be detailed to ride on each car traversing the danger zones. This request was promptly and steadfastly refused because "the presence of police officers on the cars would influence the public and incite to violence," according to Mayor Rolph. But the mayor stated his unalterable intention to enforce the law. Anyone found carrying concealed weapons would be arrested and prosecuted relentlessly.

He kept his word. When the company sent out its cars, police officers were on hand to search the crews and the guards for "concealed weapons." Railroad employees by the score were arrested on this charge. It was not necessary that the "concealed weapon" be a revolver. Six men were arrested because they carried electricians' pliers; automobile loads of guards were arrested because pick handles and revolvers were found, not on their persons but in the automobile; motormen were arrested because they carried switch irons while turning switches. They were arrested on a charge of carrying concealed weapons even when they obeyed the rule of the company and took the controller bar with them as they stepped off the car.

Yet there is on record not one single case of an unprovoked assault by a substitute upon a striker.

Mayor Rolph would not allow members of the police force to ride on the cars; he sanctioned and encouraged the search of the railroad's employees for "concealed weapons." What was the result?

I saw four police officers board a car while a mob of strikers looked on, search the crew and the guard for weapons and depart

with empty hands. Two blocks away the car was attacked, the assailants being encouraged by the positive knowledge that the car men could not defend themselves except with their bare fists.

The guard and the conductor were sent to the hospital. Long after the slugging was over the police arrived on the scene.

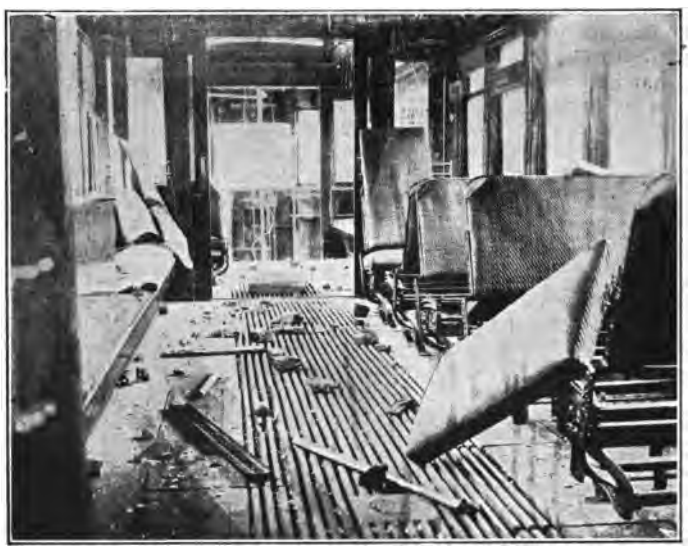
Motorman Sweeney, a veteran of the Civil War, seventy-one years old, declined to strike after a continuous service of many years. With seven hundred others he remained at work. He was attacked and beaten up twice by a gang of lusty young strikers. After the second assault he bought a revolver. The police promptly arrested him. He was found guilty by Police Judge Oppenheim and sentenced to six months in the county jail, though the sentence was suspended on account of Sweeney's age.

On the night of August 23 a mob of strikers boarded a car, pulled the trolley pole off the wire, shot and killed the conductor, shot the motorman and two guards. After the excitement had died down, Motorman Edward C. Cecil was sent out to bring the bloody car into the barn. It was a night filled with bloodshed. Before going out, Cecil borrowed a revolver. When his task was finished and the murder car had returned, Cecil was arrested for carrying a concealed weapon. He was convicted. Police Judge Oppenheim, an appointee of Mayor Rolph, sentenced him to twenty-four hours in the city jail.

From August 11 to September 17 more than 700 cases of assault occurred, more than 300 employees of the railroad were injured so badly that their wounds required surgical treatment. A dozen men sustained fractured skulls; others had noses, ribs and jaws broken; scores were knocked over the head, thrown down and kicked in the face. The percentage of casualties was far higher than on the Western front, yet the police, acting under Mayor Rolph's direction, denied them the right to carry even a pick handle for self-defense and had more than a hundred of them arrested on charges of carrying concealed weapons.

In the police court two magistrates, Morris Oppenheim and Mathew Brady, both seeking reëlection coöperated loyally with the mayor and the police in the effort to help the strikers win. It had been customary from time immemorial to require $50 bail on a charge of carrying concealed weapons. Oppenheim raised this bail to $1000, even in cases where the "weapon" consisted of a pair of pliers, a switch iron or a pick handle. Manuel Osuna, an old employee of the company, was given six months in the county jail because he carried a revolver. A guard employed by the railroad was given the same stiff sentence on an identical charge. Neither had given the least cause of offense except to make use of the constitutional right of self-defense during a period when they were liable to be assailed by strikers.

But when the strikers came into court charged with an offense, their reception was totally different. Non-union men whose crime consisted in carrying a gun or a club were given six months in jail, but strikers who had sent bricks crashing through the car windows were released on their own recognizance; others, having been found guilty, were sentenced to jail terms not exceeding thirty days in length, but these sentences were suspended by Judges Oppenheim and Brady.



After the bombardment. Car crews who carried clubs or pick handles for self-defense were arrested by the San Francisco police and charged with carrying concealed weapons

It is well settled in law that the testimony of one eyewitness is sufficient for a conviction in a misdemeanor case. In the San Francisco police courts, this rule was disregarded. In case after case the defendant striker was discharged on account of "insufficient evidence" because the arresting police officer had failed to bring in corroborating witnesses. Whenever the defendant denied that he had thrown the brick or wielded the club, he was discharged unless the officer's testimony was supported by additional witnesses. The striker's word was given greater weight than the word of the officer. So flagrant was this condition that the strikers, realizing that they had nothing to fear from the

authorities, went on their slugging expeditions openly contemptuous of the law and its representatives.

They were told by their leaders that they need have no fear. While these leaders in their public statements indignantly denied that the strikers were guilty of violence, in the privacy of the union meetings the men were exhorted to beat up the "scabs," were told to show more activity, to go out and "work" without fear of consequences, as the mayor, the police and the police courts were with them.

Keeping in mind that two employees of the railroad were sentenced to long jail terms for carrying concealed weapons, here is what happened to one, Giometti, a strikebreaker, arrested on a similar charge and held for trial under a bond of $1000 furnished by the railroad. Becoming scared, Giometti quit and went over to the strikers, whereupon the railroad withdrew from his bond and surrendered the man into the custody of the police. Immediately the union leaders proceeded to bail him out. The character of his offense had not changed, but he no longer was a strikebreaker. As a good union man he could be trusted with a pistol, so his bail was reduced to $100 and eventually his case was dismissed by Judge Oppenheim. Thus it was conclusively demonstrated to the strikers that they might with impunity commit offenses for which the non-union workers received six months in jail.

Not to be outdone by other branches of the municipal administration, the Board of Health proceeded to assist the union forces to the best of its ability. When the strike had been in progress three weeks, a new state law regulating sanitary conditions in hotels and rooming houses went into effect. Mayor Rolph had denounced the strikebreakers housed in the various car barns as the scum of the earth, but the moment the new law became effective his health department took an extreme interest in the healthfulness of their surroundings, and prosecution of the railroad was threatened unless it subdivided its dormitories so as to hold only twenty men each. The state labor commissioner, formerly affiliated with the teamsters' union tried hard to prove that the state labor laws had been violated when the substitutes were brought to San Francisco; the United States marshal's office was induced to hunt for slackers among the substitutes; every available official was mobilized to lend a hand in the attempt to drive the railroad to the wall.

When numerous "wrecking crews" and "entertainment committees" of the strikers had become bold enough to commit murder Frederick J. Koster, chairman of the Law and Order Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, addressed Mayor Rolph and demanded that he, as executive head of the city ad-

ministration, do his sworn duty and put an end to the unchecked violence. The Koster letter contained a hundred and eighty words. Mayor Rolph replied with a communication of a thousand words, most of them denouncing the Chamber of Commerce, blaming it for the "industrial unrest and class hatred," praising the police force and minimizing the importance of the rioting.

"Doubtless you are disappointed because the police have not yet turned machine guns on crowds in our streets and killed a few dozen strikers including the customary number of innocent bystanders. . . . You still believe in Napoleon's whiff of grapeshot," wrote the mayor, but the arrests of railroad employees carrying pick handles continued and no policeman boarded a car except to search the crews for "concealed weapons." Day after day the union leaders continued publicly to denounce violence while the "wrecking crews" became so bold that they captured a substitute motorman and carried him to the Labor Temple, where he was rescued by the police. And day after day the public's sympathy for the cause of the strikers crumbled away until the entire city, the majority of the strikers included, was heartily sick of violence and its apologists.

San Francisco's administration for fifteen years has been controlled by men who placed the selfish aims and objects of union labor ahead of the community's welfare. During this period the city officials from the mayor and the police department to the police courts, have consistently taken the side of organized labor in industrial disputes. Instead of enforcing the law with even-handed impartiality, violence was not suppressed, crimes by union men were condoned and the full severity of the law was applied only to non-union men. The employer of non-union help to all intents and purposes was an outlaw who could gain protection only through his own strength or by yielding to the demands of the union. Owing to this condition, San Francisco stood still industrially, even moved backward while every other Far Western city leaped ahead, and this retrograde movement was not arrested until the world war created abnormal conditions.

offer a whole evening of thrills for a dime. Democracy is a good-natured, easy-going, pot-bellied sort of a fellow who wants to be let alone, who dodges trouble and habitually allows the life and fire insurance premiums to become overdue, habits and traits which make it easy to lead him around by the nose. The average citizen in a democracy is too preoccupied with his personal business to pay public business the attention it needs, hence public affairs are conducted by men who make it more or less their private business. The pension graft, the rivers-and-harbors pork barrel, the public-buildings steal, the extravagance, inefficiency and boodling in state, county and municipal administration are possible only because the average citizen is too busy or too indifferent to give to public affairs the time, the thought and the attention they need. Once a year or every two years he spends half an hour scanning the ballot; thereafter he marks it, hoping that the new set of office holders will do better than their predecessors, and proceeds to forget public business. It never occurs to him to go to the meetings of the city council, to watch the doings of the state legislature or to follow the record of his Congressman—unless he is in politics, in which case he ceases to be an average citizen.

And in the meantime the Boss rewards the faithful, punishes the insurgents, distributes patronage, contracts, offices and favors—all paid for by the average citizen—where they will produce the maximum amount of good for the Boss. Knowing the apathy, the indifference, the sheep-like qualities of the average citizen, the Boss builds up a machine which can deliver at all times a solid block of interested votes where they are most needed. The rest is easy. Unless the official's record is too infernally besmirched, the civic indifference and ignorance of the voting mass enable the Boss to keep his puppets in positions of power.

The craft union began life as a simon-pure, all-wool democracy. Long before Oregon imported the initiative, the referendum and the recall from Switzerland, the trade unions had a complete set of these "tools of democracy" in daily use. Fifty and a hundred years ago the English trade unions submitted every problem to the vote of all the members; even the quantity of ale to be consumed by the union officials at the union's expense was decided by popular vote. But most of them shifted from popular to representative government. Pure democracy did not prove efficient. Like modern Russia, the English unions were always debating, always voting. And the voting was not always intelligent. Time and again the members through the initiative voted to pay themselves higher death, accident, sick and out-of-work benefits when the kitty was practically empty. Pure democracy nearly bankrupted the great national British unions,

clogged their administrative machinery and impaired their fighting efficiency. So they amended their constitutions and delegated the powers of the membership to representatives and officers. But they excluded politics so far as such an exclusion was possible.

The modern English trade union combines the functions of a mutual insurance company with those of a labor organization. It collects and disburses enormous sums annually, but it does not fill its administration with political henchmen and job-seekers. The elected general officers have no chance to build up a machine by handing out plums to their friends and supporters. Candidates for positions must pass rigorous civil service examinations and once the best fitted have been selected competitively, they hold their jobs for life.

Like its English prototype, the American trade union started out as an undiluted democracy and, in outward form, it has preserved this primitive democracy far better than the British organizations. The railway brotherhoods, the printers and many others still decide all important and many unimportant issues by a referendum vote of the entire membership; many unions impose a fine on every member who fails to cast his ballot on special propositions. All of them in their constitutions vest the supreme power in the body of the membership, but unfortunately this power too frequently is nominal only. Organized labor, especially the local unions and the district organizations, today is run by bosses and gangsters far more autocratically than the city of Philadelphia, for instance.

And the principal, primary reason for this boss-ridden condition of the average trade union is the fear, apathy and indifference of the bulk of the membership.

The sober, efficient mechanic with a steady job and a family to look after has no particular interest in union affairs. He rarely goes to the meetings. Squabbles about the wage scale and working conditions do not bother him because a man of his kind usually earns more than the union scale and is held in high esteem by his employer. He has not the gift of fluent gab, he does not aspire to office; he does not hunt for trouble; if he suspects that there is something rotten in the union circle, he shrugs his shoulders and keeps away. Thousands of union meetings are held in the United States every week, but in few of them more than a quarter of the membership takes part, no matter how important the issue up for decision may be.

As the example of the boilermakers' union shows, this refusal of the union members to do their democratic duty is far more pronounced than the indifference of the average citizen. Almost any kind of an election induces at least half the qualified voters

to go to the polls, whereas union issues are usually decided by less than a third of the membership unless the poll is taken by mail or at the places of employment.

Ask your friend who belongs to the union whether this is true; if he is frank, he will unreservedly acknowledge this fundamental weakness of the labor organizations.

What is the result?

The small radical minority runs the union. The man without home ties, the disgruntled worker, the office seeker, the inefficient mechanic constantly out of a job, the floater, the drifter and the silver-tongued orator who loves to hear himself talk, the man who would rather fight than eat and the scarlet revolutionary, they are on hand regularly when the gavel falls. They decide the union policy, strike the keynote, form a wheel within a wheel, make up the "wrecking crews" and "entertainment committees" and see to it that the Boss is kept in power and on the payroll.

Ask any union man whether this picture is overdrawn. If he is frank, he will confess that he has not attended a union meeting in a month of Sundays.

The man who rises from the ranks to union leadership must be a fighter, a diplomat, a politician, a consummate wire puller and a ready rough-and-tumble speaker. He leaps into the saddle by the sheer power of his personality. Once he is in the saddle, he uses every means known to the political boss to keep himself there, and the apathy of the average member makes his task fairly easy. With his supporters and partisans he prepares the slate and carries it through even if there is opposition, stuffing the ballot box if necessary. And he sees to it that every measure decided upon by the ring goes through. He is the dictator; his ukase prevails, the semblance of democratic procedure notwithstanding.

There are unions having "chin men," scrappers who silence opposition by a blow on the point of the lower jaw. If the use of force is inexpedient, the meeting is held in a hall which will accommodate only a fraction of the membership—and the radical members are on hand early. If the hall is too large for this trick, the meeting is protracted by endless discussions of trivial details till long past midnight. The family man, the man who has to go to work at eight in the morning, yawns and departs. When the chairman judges that his supporters at last have a safe majority, the real business of the meeting is brought up and rushed through.

As a rule, however, these drastic measures are not necessary because the union boss holds in his hand the power to take away the livelihood of almost every member, especially in those unions

in which the period of employment is irregular. They have three choices: Obey, starve or go elsewhere.

Suppose you are a first-class union carpenter, plumber or roofer going into a closed-shop community. You register at union headquarters. After a few days the secretary sends you to a job. The business agent does not like the color of your hair, the cut of your overalls or the drift of your talk. He intimates to the contractor that things will go more smoothly if he should lay you off. Out you go. You go to headquarters and complain. The secretary listens and glares, classing you as a trouble-maker and an undesirable citizen. No more jobs for you at union headquarters. You rustle a berth of your own. Pretty soon the business agent appears in the offing. What can the contractor do? You are nothing to him. Trouble with the union can ruin him. Out you go again and if you are wise, you give up the fight and go elsewhere.

The power to give or deny employment, to play favorites, to save the good jobs for the "good" members and keep the unruly ones on the waiting list is one of the strongest weapons of many union officials. This does not mean that it is in universal use, but it lies at hand, ready for punishment or reward. Against its tyranny both worker and employer are alike helpless in closed-shop communities. So highly do certain union officials prize this weapon that in one case the employment bureau established by a San Francisco trade association was placed under the union ban. Any member registering in this bureau was threatened with a fine, thus keeping control over the opportunities to work in the hands of the union officials.

Of course it would be foolish to assert that sinister motives alone caused the imposition of this fine. Every union man smells the blacklist, frequently with good reason, behind any employment bureau established by an organization of employers, but this suspicion also helps unscrupulous union officials to keep the power of giving and withholding work in their own hands.

Perhaps the finest example of autocracy in these United States is presented by the Building Trades' Council of San Francisco, P. H. McCarthy, Dictator and Czar. For almost two decades McCarthy, ex-mayor of San Francisco, has been doing plain and fancy dictating in three eight-hour shifts at the head of this remarkable organization. For nearly twenty years *he* has been the Building Trades' Council, cracking the whip and making the animals hop through the flaming hoops. Once upon a time he was an ordinary carpenter working for three and a half a day; now he is at the head of his cabinet, making probably ten thousand dollars a year and earning every penny of his salary, for under his reign his willing subjects have seen their wages go

up until they passed beyond the top of the scale paid the building trades anywhere in the United States.

The Building Trades' Council consists of the delegates from the various member unions, these delegates being elected by popular vote. But—and this is a large, fat "but"—the Council has the right of veto. It can and does deny a seat to any delegate not acceptable to a majority of the delegates already seated. McCarthy carries this majority in his lower left vest pocket alongside of his watch. This majority is hand-picked, sun-cured, sized and graded, each specimen rubber-stamped with the initials P. H. M. None has come in without McCarthy's O. K.; none will come in unless the Czar has assurance that the delegate will stand without hitching, obey orders like a German soldier and follow the McCarthy banner without a question.

If the House of Representatives were abolished, if the Senate were the sole legislative body and the Supreme Court in one, if no Senator could enter the portals of the Capitol without the President's approval; if the Senate thus dominated by the President could levy any taxes it saw fit; dispose of them as it saw fit, if it could order anybody and everybody to quit work and to go back, if it had a hand in fixing everybody's wages and hours and profits, if it wielded dictatorial economic as well as political power, wouldn't this country be the ideal refuge of Nick Romanoff and the Kaiser?

Yet that is an exact replica of the autocratic power wielded by P. H. McCarthy as president of the San Francisco Building Trades' Council.

It happens that the vast responsibility has changed McCarthy from a radical to a conservative, from a hot-headed brawler into a cautious, foresighted leader with whose rule both the mechanics and the employers seem fairly satisfied. He has used his power to make the unions under his sceptre live up to their agreements. He has gotten for them every concession he could wring out of the contractors, but when he saw that the demands were excessive and would provoke a fight that might prove disastrous, he has counselled moderation. As mayor and as union official he has played the game for the exclusive benefit of the building trades, but he rarely overplayed his hand and he followed the rules whenever he could.

Yet, admitting the best that is said of McCarthy, is it wise, is it democratic to place such limitless power in the hands of one man? Suppose Sam Parks were at the head of the Building Trades' Council?

Sam Parks was a riveter by trade, a big, pugnacious fighter who made himself one of the four business agents of the Housesmiths' Union in New York and acquired as much autocratic power as

McCarthy wields in San Francisco. Riding on the crest of the prosperity wave that began in 1898 he made the union believe that he personally was responsible for their increased wages, and thereafter he was Czar. Whatever internal opposition he encountered was smashed by the fists and brass knuckles of his henchmen. He spent more than $150,000 of the union funds without an accounting. He levied blackmail on employers right

P. H. McCarthy, ex-mayor of San Francisco, and Kaiser of the Building Trades' Council. He exemplifies the best type of benevolent autocrats among labor leaders

and left, called strikes without consulting anybody and sent the men back to work like so many sheep. So strong was his hold upon the union that he was reëlected after he had been indicted for blackmail, and his salary continued even after he had been convicted. Yea, his dupes placed him at the head of the Labor Day parade and decorated his horse with garlands of flowers when he was released on bail after he had been convicted, after

his crimes had been exposed so thoroughly that no doubt of his guilt remained.

The power and the greed, the autocratic sway of Carvill of the derrick men was second only to Sam Parks' appetite. Until he collided with the criminal law, Murphy of the stone cutters ran the union with a high hand—and ran off with $27,000 of the union funds. Only a short while ago two business agents powerful in the Cleveland building trades were put into stripes for blackmail. They, too, had called out "their" men and sent them back to work like docile sheep, making the contractor pay for "industrial peace." In Chicago, so the reports run, scarcity of skilled labor has made of labor blackmail a fine art, as profitable to the inner ring as the choicest war bride, and signs are not wanting that elsewhere the price of peace is steadily climbing.

Go forth among union men and induce them to talk frankly. Among the rank and file few have confidence in the integrity of their leaders. They shrug their shoulders expressively and growl. What can they do? If they begin to question, to investigate, they get into trouble; the insiders won't stand for "monkey business" and the cry of "traitor" silences the lone insurgent. If they go into union politics and try to oust the gang they believe crooked, the fight will surely weaken and may disrupt the organization, a catastrophe no union man will deliberately bring about. Yet the greed of the leader may result in the same thing, as the deck hands found out.

Henry Huntsman was the ruler of the Bay and River Steamboat Men's Union whose four hundred odd members consisted largely of Portuguese, Chilians and Sicilians. The union had the closed shop; only its members could work on the thirty boats running out of San Francisco. The business agent could come aboard, wake the men out of their sleep to collect the dues, tell them how much freight they might load on a truck and boss them as though he were running the boat. All of which he did.

In May, 1916, a committee of the Huntsman union threatened to call a strike unless wages were raised from $50 to $55 a month. Including $25 for board and room plus the average amount of overtime, these unskilled laborers were then earning the equivalent of $100 a month, a far greater amount than they could possibly obtain in the open market.

Though the steamboat owners asked for delay until their application for higher freight rates could be decided, Huntsman ordered the men out. They went, lost the strike and came back as individuals. Union members were not barred, but the secretary no longer could collect dues aboard the vessels.

In May, 1917, the owners voluntarily advanced wages $5 a month. A week later Huntsman called another strike. He

demanded that every employee be obliged to join the union and that the union officials be again given access to the boats, thus enabling the secretary to be at hand on pay day ready to collect the monthly dues of a dollar a head. When the demand was refused, all the men walked out, not because they were dissatisfied but because the union boss ordered them to quit. They were afraid of the consequences should they disobey. They are all back at work now. They are no longer afraid. But the union is gone to pieces, and gone with it is an income of four hundred dollars a month, killed by a boss who could not let well enough alone.

Is there an immediate solution of the problem how to make the American trade union safe for democracy? I doubt it. The process takes time. The printers, the railroad men, the steam shovel operators, the cigar makers and a number of others have solved the problem of responsible leadership, especially in their national organizations, and they have solved it largely because of the higher level of intelligence among the rank and file. But it is different in the lower grades of labor. There the best solution, to my mind, lies with the employer. If he can gain the confidence of his men, if he can prove to them that he can and will take better care of them than the union leaders, the power of the unscrupulous labor boss will be broken almost overnight.

CHAPTER IX

BOLSHEVIKI OF THE WEST

A heater boy decided that he needed a rest. Having arrived at this decision, he slipped away, picked out a warm place between two piles of lumber and went to sleep for two hours. During his absence the riveter and the holder-on twiddled their thumbs, waiting for the red hot rivets that did not come. The foreman was in a white rage. He demanded an explanation. The boy grinned.

"None of your damned business," he replied impudently. "I got a right to stay away as long as I please."

The foreman fired him on the spot. Within an hour every heater boy in the plant had quit. A thousand riveters and helpers were idle. In two hours the culprit was back at work—and every heater boy puffed out his chest when the foreman passed.

This incident occurred early in November, 1917, in one of the big shipyards of San Francisco bay. It is an incident typical of the spirit in which Far Western union labor at that time approached the task of building ships for the government. It is a most significant incident. With the facts to be hereafter recited it shows that discipline in the industrial army was rapidly disintegrating. It indicates that the same processes which turned Russia's military and manufacturing organizations into reckless, heedless mobs were likewise at work in the most important of the American arsenals, the shipyards.

Here is the companion piece of the heater-boy episode.

In September, 1917, all of the employees of a San Francisco factory struck in common with the metal trades. An assistant foreman, member of the machinists' union, noticed that there were scores of loaded cars in the factory yard. He knew that every freight car was needed to haul coal and war supplies, that perishable food materials were spoiling and factories shutting down because not enough cars could be had. As a patriotic duty he offered to unload those cars, but among the union men he found no helpers. He fired the small yard locomotive, hooked onto the cars, pushed them to the big electric traveling crane and single-handed, working fourteen to eighteen hours a day, he unloaded and released for the nation's use more than forty freight cars. He also enabled the strikers to start work as soon as they returned.

In France he would have been given the *croix de guerre* for his devotion. In San Francisco he was cited to appear before a

court composed of the officers and business agents of the machinists' union and accused of treason. When he asked them whether they placed the welfare of the union ahead of the country's need, they replied that his first duty was not to play the scab. Though he protested that he had done no machinists' work, he was found guilty, fined fifty dollars, assessed six months' dues and *forbidden to work in any union machine shop within five hundred miles of San Francisco.*

It sounds incredible, but every statement can be substantiated. And this is but one minor occurrence in a mass of facts that throw a glaring light upon the uses to which the war needs of the nation were put by many of the Pacific Coast unions and their leaders.

The cost of living has gone up enormously. In many lines the profits of the employers have been increased enormously. Common sense, patriotism and decency dictate that those who make the increased profits possible should be most generously compensated for their labor. If ethical considerations have no weight with the employer, then ordinary business acumen would compel him to offer the best possible wages and working conditions in order to retain his old men and attract new ones during a period when skilled and unskilled labor the world over is not to be had except at a premium.

On the Pacific Coast, especially in the shipyards, this premium has been paid. The pay rolls show it. Youngsters in their teens with only a few months' training, are credited with $20, $25 and $30 a week. Riveters have earned, on piece work and overtime, from $60 to $100 a week at the old rates in force before the Federal Wage Adjustment Board recommended an increase of more than thirty per cent. These earnings and even higher ones no reasonable man will begrudge the workers. In this emergency, when cost is no object and maximum production is of supreme importance, no wage the employers can pay is too high if the worker will in return give the best that is in him.

This he must do. The country demands it of him. The country imperatively needs, absolutely must have, the highest production of iron and steel manufactures. Above all things, the country must have ships, ships of all sizes and materials turned out faster and in larger quantities than ever before. Even if the submarines should not sink another steamer, there will not be sufficient tonnage available to transport all of the million American soldiers to Europe and to keep them properly supplied with food, ammunition and equipment.

According to Captain A. F. Pillsbury, district head for the Shipping Board in San Francisco, the average output per riveting gang in the Union Iron Works was 359 rivets, counting hard ones and easy ones. This was in peace times. In the fall and winter

months of 1917 scarcely a yard around San Francisco bay averaged better than 150 to 165 rivets per gang in eight hours. In other words, the yards were operating at an efficiency of about 40 per cent.

Part of this decreased efficiency was undoubtedly due to poor management, shortage of steel and equipment and to the introduction of large numbers of men unfamiliar with ship riveting, yet conscious, deliberate slacking and loafing on the job was responsible for a heavy percentage of the almost incredible decrease in efficiency.

Every plate hanger, every holder-on, every shearer, planer, puncher and machinist was asked by the nation to exert himself in this emergency, to do more than his peace-time stint for his country and for the excess pay he received.

Was he doing it?

Was he?

This was the situation on the Pacific Coast late in 1917: To turn out the minimum allotted amount of tonnage on schedule time, the yards would have to work in at least two eight-hour shifts. To reach their full capacity, three eight-hour shifts were necessary. In December they were working *one* shift of eight hours plus overtime, and they were short-handed even on this one shift. Thousands of men were needed to bring the gangs swarming over the hulls to full strength.

It would seem that every individual engaged in shipbuilding would have sensed the emergency and responded to the need with every ounce of energy. It would seem that the boilermakers, more especially those engaged in riveting, would stretch themselves to the limit in order to speed the completion of the hulls. The riveter is the man who actually puts the ship together, whose pneumatic hammer drives the steel rivets that hold plates and frame together. His work is highly paid, but not highly skilled. On straight shell work almost any able-bodied normal man can become a fair riveter with three months' practice. If the material is on hand, the speed of ship construction depends largely on the speed of the riveting gangs and this speed can be ascertained easily. The average stint of an average riveter on straight shell work is about 400 rivets a day; to exceed 500 rivets a day is not an unusual performance. Still, to be on the safe side, let us say that 300 rivets per day constitutes the average. Mind you, this figure is 25 per cent below standard.

Taking the Pacific Coast shipyards as a whole, a small number of riveters will reach and surpass 400 rivets a day, but the bulk of the men did not stretch themselves at all. I doubt whether the average of all the yards combined, with the high record of the piece-rate workers included, would reach 200 rivets per day per

gang in December, 1917. In all probability it was nearer 150 than 200 rivets. Accepting 300 rivets as a fair average and applying a similar ratio to all other processes, this means that if union labor would give merely a fair day's work for a fair day's pay the Pacific Coast yards could turn out a ship in *less than two months* when it then took *more than three months.*

Lest this be considered an exaggeration, read what the employers told the Federal Wage Adjustment Board in their brief filed in October, 1917:

"We desire to state that restriction of output is a very noticeable and glaring fault which we are struggling to overcome. We call your attention to the fact that this restriction of output runs through every trade in this district, and has enjoyed its greatest growth through an organized effort to bring about its accomplishment. It is apparent to us that in many shops a careful record is kept either by memory or otherwise of the various particular pieces or parts which are supposed to require a certain amount of time to finish, and if a new man should through error attempt to do more than this he is very often called down and even fined if he persists in making such a grievous error as to give his best efforts to the firm he is working for. This plan is carried out by virtue of committee men in the shop, traveling representatives, or between the men themselves. Any workman who desires to make his own way to a better wage is positively hampered and discouraged from so doing and his only chance of recognition for satisfactory service is to be kept on the payroll during slack times longer than the poorer workman. In some cases this restriction is such that the workmen themselves notice the low day's production required of the particular job and even go so far as to state that they could readily turn out more work, but they are not allowed to do so by their organization."

The employers substantiated their allegations by incontrovertible evidence so strong that the commissioners shook their heads in amazement and remarked, privately, that the condition of affairs in the shipyards was absolutely incredible.

The boilermakers' union up and down the coast protested vociferously against the schedule of pay recommended by the Wage Adjustment Board, averring that the increase was not high enough to cover the rising cost of necessities. At the same time the boilermakers' union—which includes the riveters—also insisted vociferously upon a Saturday half-holiday, just as though the submarines were in the habit of going home for week-end parties. The Seattle boilermakers' union actually refused to work on four Saturday afternoons, tying up the shipyards until forced to keep at work by outside pressure. Whether any real work was done on Saturday is a question which, in the light of

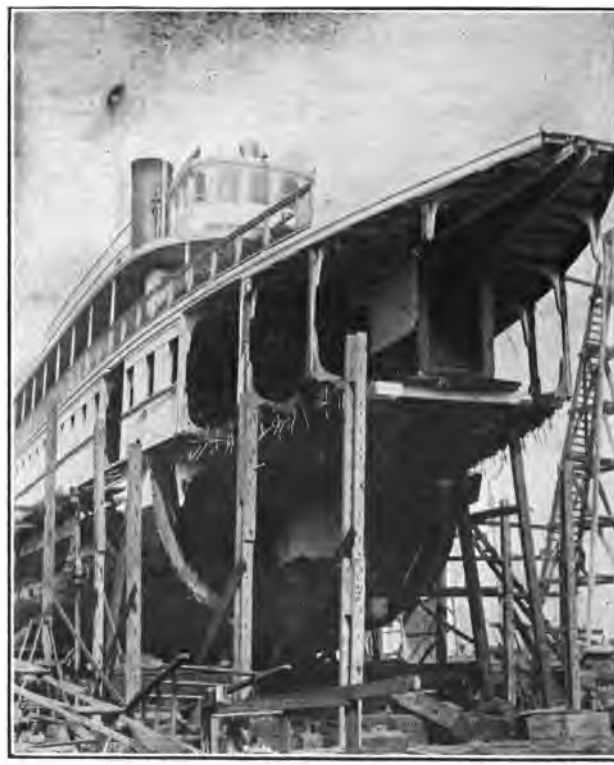
the riveters' capacity for loafing, may be safely answered in the negative.

The Adjustment Board was told that the unions affiliated with the Iron Trades' Council of San Francisco insisted upon rigid adherence to their rules, the war notwithstanding. For example, if a welder was needed to repair a boiler, he could not do the work by himself. A union boilermaker had to be hired to sit and watch the welder work with his oxy-acetylene flame. By the same token, the steamfitters' union insisted that a member be present drawing pay and doing nothing except to discuss the war, while the welder repaired a steampipe.

In England one of the first acts of the Lloyd-George ministry was to pass a law abolishing all rules, regulations and practices introduced by the British unions to hamper and restrict output. In the United States no such law has been passed. On the contrary, all the protestations of Samuel Gompers notwithstanding, the unions tried, on the Pacific Coast at least, to use the general shortage of skilled labor to draw the lines tighter and tighter. Take a look at our old friends, the shipwrights' and caulkers' union, for example.

Before the war this union was ossified. Owing to the decline of the wooden ship, few shipwrights and caulkers were needed and their organizations had a watertight, leakproof monopoly in the San Francisco district. No shipwright or caulker could work anywhere in the district unless he was a member of the union, and the union saw to it that the membership did not become excessively large. This union openly restricted the output of its members. Its by-laws provided that no union caulker could caulk more than 150 feet of deck or 100 feet of side seam of old work in eight hours. This restriction was not lifted, war or no war. Though the average caulker can easily do thirty per cent more than the union maximum, he was held down to his peace-time output even though he was receiving an ever-increasing war wage.

Nor have other restrictive practices been abolished by this union. Among these practices is a rule which compels every shipyard to send to union headquarters when it needs caulkers and shipwrights. The other day the owner of an Oakland, California, yard shifted a crew of his caulkers to a vessel which needed a small amount of emergency work done in a hurry. The men had been steadily employed in his yard for a long time, but when he came to take them from the vessel back to their regular work, they declined. It was against the union rules. He must take them and their tools to union headquarters, hire them again and pay them for half a day. Argument was of no avail. The union rules had to be obeyed and the shipbuilder had to hire his



This steamer was placed in drydock by union shipworkers, cut in two and abandoned because the owners refused to compel their deckhands to join the union

old employees as though he had never seen them before, incidentally paying full time for the trip to and from union headquarters.

It seems incredible that such union rules, no matter how well founded they may have been at some time in the distant past, should have been enforced vigorously and to the letter, regardless of the delay and the friction caused, during a period when the industrial structure of the nation was trembling clear to the anchor blocks of the foundation with the excessive strain placed upon it. Yet it is only too true that union labor, the utterances of Samuel Gompers notwithstanding, was making use of the national emergency to demand twenty ounces of flesh instead of

the pound and that, on the Pacific Coast at least, it would rather help the closed shop than democracy to win. Union labor for a time demonstrated on the Pacific Coast that it could be just as coldly, just as brutally, selfish as the worst of the buzzard crowd of profiteers who squeeze bloody dollars out of the misery of the warring nations.

Here is a sample of union-labor war-time tactics:

The Monticello Steamship Company runs a line of steamers between San Francisco and Vallejo, California. These steamers handle a goodly part of the freight and passenger traffic to and from the Navy Yard on Mare Island. In the summer of 1917, one of the concern's three steamers was placed in drydock to be lengthened. Union shipwrights went to work on the boat without hesitation, but when the vessel was cut in two and unfit for use, they suddenly picked up their tools and walked off. Why?

Because the Monticello Steamship Company employed non-union deckhands, though paying union wages and observing union hours.

For ten years and more this concern had operated under full union, closed-shop conditions, paying the highest wages on the coast. Only when the exactions of the deckhands' union boss became intolerable did the concern, in common with other boat owners, show fight. As a result of this fight the union was disrupted; practically all the union deckhands, most of them Portuguese and Chileans, went to work under open-shop conditions at increased wages. Huntsman, the boss of the defunct union, could no longer *compel* the deckhands to pay a dollar a month dues. Labor leaders must help one another, of course. So it was arranged that the leaders of the ship workers' organization should put one of the concern's steamers out of business and keep it useless until the company would come to terms.

The vessel was in drydock, cut in two, for many months. No union mechanic dared touch it, even though the Commandant of the Mare Island Navy Yard asked the Wage Adjustment Board to see that full traffic facilities were restored by having the steamer placed in commission. The Wage Adjustment Board sidestepped the issue by declaring that it was concerned only with work performed directly for the government.

On this same grounds this federal board refused to take any action in the case of the wooden steamer "Trinidad," built in an open-shop yard at Eureka, California, and towed to the Union Iron Works at Alameda, on San Francisco bay, to have her engines installed. For many years wooden hulls have been built at non-union yards up and down the Pacific Coast and union mechanics in San Francisco have built and installed the engines without a word of protest, just as they have without a murmur

repaired ships operated by non-union crews. The rank and file of union labor would have continued to work on any vessel at the present time, but the leaders saw in the war needs of the nation an opportunity to extend their power and to compel the unionization of yards which they had been unable to organize through other means. So they proclaimed the doctrine that only "fair" vessels and "fair" materials could be handled in the San Francisco yards.

These "unfair" boilers lay on the docks for weeks because the union boilermakers refused to install them in the ships until government pressure compelled them to yield

Mind you, in peace times this issue was never raised. Not until the emergency arose, not until the building of the largest number of ships in the shortest possible time became a task upon the completion of which the fate of many nations depended, not until the dispatch of a great American army to Europe was decided upon and the need of enormous amounts of tonnage became apparent, not until the shipworkers had the nation in a corner did their leaders decide that now was the time to press their advantage and establish a precedent.

So the labor leaders, more especially M. J. McGuire and other officials of the boilermakers' union, placed the "unfair" steamer "Trinidad" under the ban, threatening any union man with a fine of fifty dollars if he dared work on the vessel. To them the necessities of the nation meant nothing—except a chance to extend their power. Also they placed the ban on eight Scotch boilers built by the Willamette Iron & Steel Company of Portland, Oregon, for the Moore & Scott yards, where they were to be installed in four new freighters under construction for the government. The Portland concern refused to recognize the unions; though the Wage Adjustment Board found conditions and wages in the plant fully up to the standard of the unionized establishments, still the concern was "unfair to organized labor" and its output was boycotted. For weeks the boilers, some of them partly installed when the labor leaders issued the "unfair" order, lay on the docks or in the hulls without being touched. They would have been there until the end of the war and the return of the usual labor surplus if the government had not intervened.

In this book it has been stated repeatedly that the employers of the San Francisco district never have fought the unions as such. They have been wise, liberal and broad-minded enough to realize that organization gives the individual worker a degree of protection which he can obtain in no other way. Hence the employers recognized the unions, conceded the "closed shop" and, being practically unorganized, yielded almost every demand. Without this attitude of the employers the unions could never have obtained their present stranglehold.

This attitude of the employers, both in San Francisco and in Seattle, is changing rapidly now. The events of 1917 have proven to them that a continued absolute domination of the field by union labor will mean the speedy extinction of all large-scale manufacturing, particularly in the metal trades, as soon as competitive conditions return. They are fighting mad and helpless—at present. They have seen wages go up and the output come down; they have seen the business agents of the unions exercise so far-reaching a control in every shop that discipline and authority were crippled. They have seen the ship carpenters of the Union Iron Works strike for two weeks because too many house carpenters—all union men—were put to work building docks, ships and scaffolds, work which any carpenter can perform. They have seen the unions violate their agreements by the "silent strike" in which the men quit one by one as individuals until the shop was empty, and they have had to give in, agreements notwithstanding. They have seen a country-wide shortage of skilled molders relieved in Eastern and Middle

Western open-shop plants by breaking in laborers to do the common tasks of the trade which any intelligent man can learn in a few days, thus releasing the skilled molders for the really essential work. But in the closed-shop plants of the Pacific Coast the molders' union maintains a rigid monopoly; no laborer is allowed to touch any part of a molder's work; it must all be done by full-fledged union members. Every shop is desperately short of molders, but the union does not care so long as its monopoly is unimpaired.

Organized labor now has the greatest chance in its history on the Pacific Coast. If it will prove that the closed shop means more and better work in return for higher wages—a basic *maximum* wage of $4.80 was recommended for the Atlantic, a *minimum* wage of $5.25 for the Pacific Coast by the Federal Wage Adjustment Board before both coasts were placed on the same basis—it can so fortify itself, can bring about such close and cordial relations with the employers that its position will be unshakable in the future. If, on the other hand, it persists in raising wages and lowering the output, if it continues to hamper production with restrictive regulations, it will surely have to pay the accumulating score when war ends and surplus succeeds labor shortage, if not before.

CHAPTER X

SLACKERS IN THE WESTERN SHIPYARDS

The Liberty Bond issues were oversubscribed on the Pacific Coast; the Red Cross, the Y. M. C. A. donations went "over the top" with a whoop; in voluntary enlistments the Pacific Coast beat the Atlantic seaboard. Meatless and wheatless days were universally and gladly observed. There was little grumbling about war taxes, and those who have been hit hard by war exigencies submitted without bitterness. But—

In December, 1917, I presented in the pages of SUNSET an array of facts concerning labor conditions in the Pacific Coast shipyards that brought forth indignant comment from every part of the country. It seemed impossible that, during an unprecedented national emergency, organized labor in parts of the Pacific Coast should throw a monkey-wrench into the machinery, should demand higher wages than the shipyard workers in any other part of the country and, in return for these highest wages, deliberately retard the shipbuilding program by reducing the output to the lowest possible minimum. The facts than cited referred to the period before the strike of the shipyard and metal workers of the Pacific Coast in October, 1917. Since that time the shipyard workers have demanded and received wage increases aggregating 44 per cent of the old scale, but nevertheless reports persisted that the old "go slow" policy remained in full force. So I determined to find out for myself.

I have never seen as many men with both hands in their pockets during working hours as I saw during a visit to the shipyards around San Francisco bay in the middle of January, A. D. 1918.

On the perforated platform on which the small steel frames and bars are bent six men were busy, three clearing up things and three watching them. One of the latter three seemed to be the foreman.

I counted nine men on the rough casting destined to be the huge stern post of a freighter. Five of the nine were working with their hands; the other four seemed to be entertaining them with their tongues. They were still engaged on this job when I passed by again fifteen minutes later, except that the blacksmiths had lost and the jawsmiths gained one in number.

Around a punching machine I counted three ordinary workmen punching holes into steel plates, with four experts—hands in pockets—earnestly criticizing their performance. Every other piece of machinery visible from the traffic lanes seemed to

need the supervision of varying numbers of these experts, most of them of draft age.

A splendid opportunity to study the West's sturdy manhood *en masse et en repos* was afforded by the counters of the tool rooms. They seemed to be as popular as the ticket window of a movie palace, except that the service was not as rapid. And half the population of the yards was either going to or coming from the tool rooms. On no other hypothesis could the immense traffic on every lane and runway between the piles of material be explained.

But there was no danger of being swept off one's feet. The various human streams moved with excessive deliberation. I timed one youth—of draft age—whom I met alongside of a just completed freighter, its gun platforms towering high above bow and stern. He was carrying a rubber hose with a brass faucet at one end. The hose was six feet long and perhaps an inch in diameter, but the movements of the youth indicated that it must weigh at least a hundred and fifty pounds. He returned in eleven minutes. I walked to the tool shed in two minutes.

Behind the new shop where the big steel plates are punched full of holes stands an array of long, heavy tables. Traveling cranes deposit the huge plates on these tables, workmen cover them with wooden pattern frames—templates—and proceed to mark the location of the rivet holes with a light hammer and a small steel punch. The labor of inserting this steel punch into a tiny hole in the pattern and hitting it with a one-pound hammer must be extremely exhausting. Three out of every five young men—all of draft age—engaged in this nerve-wracking task were resting when I saw them, so tired that they had to sit on or lean against the edges of the tables.

A workman was inscribing upon each punched plate the cabalistic numbers and symbols designating its location in the ship-to-be. He did his work with the brush and the paint pot with painful deliberation. He labored with each number until it was absolutely perfect. And when the inscription at last was done, this artist painted a neat blue line all around the plate, framing his time-consuming masterpiece, so to speak.

Down in the material yard I watched three colored brethren move an angle bar five feet long and weighing about a hundred pounds. The two in front carried between them a steel rod upon which rested the forward end of the bar; the one in the rear held up his end without assistance. I watched the trio for quite a while, unable to make up my mind. Did they or did they not move? At last, by watching the distance between them and a fixed object I solved the problem. THEY DID MOVE! Forward they came, as steadily, as relentlessly, as the tide rises, and with just about

the same speed. The only other gang I would care to back for the booby prize in a race with this trio was a crew engaged in trundling wheelbarrows loaded with coal.

Yet candor compels me to admit seeing one grand burst of speed. It began at four thirty, ten minutes before closing time, when everywhere tools were dropped and coats brought forth. Before the echo of the whistle had died away, half the men were out of the gate and racing toward the street cars at a pace vividly contrasting with the gait on the other side of the fence.

In the car I found a seat alongside of an intelligent looking chap.

"Working over in the yard?" I inquired innocently.

He grinned and nodded. "Been at it a year 'n a half now, steady."

"Riveter?"

"Hell, no! I'm a carpenter. Drawing down thirty-nine eighty a week, steady. Could get a lot more if I wanted to, but no overtime for this chicken. Eight hours, steady, is enough for any man."

"The work is pretty hard, isn't it?" I suggested.

"Not as hard by a damsight as building houses," he replied. "In times like these it's me for the easy pickin's."

"I suppose they drive the men pretty hard in the shipyards," I ventured.

"Drive 'em?" His tone suggested astonishment. "Say, if they wanted to get a day's work out of that bunch they'd have to have a foreman to watch every man, and then they couldn't do it. The only ones that ain't loafing are the riveters on piece work, the fellows that knock out eighty or a hundred a week, and they don't do all they can. Say, you go in a room on the inside of a hull almost any time and like as not you'll see six or eight of the straight-time riveters sitting around counting their money or swapping yarns. If the straw boss hollers at 'em, they just pick up and quit. There's dozens of places that'll take 'em and no questions asked. There's too much work nowadays for anybody to stand being hollered at."

What was wrong with organized labor in the shipyards around San Francisco bay? Were the men underpaid? Had they just and righteous grievances?

In September, 1917, they were dissatisfied. Their basic wage rate, embodied in an agreement with the employers, had not been changed for two years. In these two years their cost of living and their employers' profits had gone up enormously. So the men struck.

In November the Federal Wage Adjustment Board, after extended hearings all along the Pacific Coast, settled the strike

by granting the men an increase of 31 per cent, making the minimum base wage $5.25 instead of $4 for eight hours. But the San Francisco Iron Trades' Council was not satisfied with this award. From the Buffalo convention of the American Federation of Labor three of its representatives went to Washington. There, without giving the employers a chance to present their side of the case the Shipping Board granted the shipyard workers of the Pacific Coast engaged on government work an additional "war bonus" of 10 per cent, payable to every man who worked forty-eight hours a week, this bonus to be paid unconditionally and irrespective of the hours worked per week after February 1. The board granted this additional pay on the ground that the extraordinarily high wages would induce mechanics to come from the interior to the shipyards, thus increasing production.

Did the bonus accomplish the desired result?

This is what happened: In and around San Francisco all the metal workers affiliated with the Iron Trades' Council and not employed in the shipyards struck for the additional ten per cent in December. They brought to a complete standstill all work on airplane motors, gas engines, tractors, ship engines and other war contracts. Of course they got the ten per cent. What else could the employers do? And they got it unconditionally, so that the private shops were paying overtime based on a wage of $5.80 per eight hours, whereas the shipyards were computing their overtime pay on the basis of only $5.25.

The result was that skilled mechanics left government ship work in order to obtain more overtime pay in the private establishments.

Also, the metal workers' unions throughout the interior of the Far West, instead of allowing their members to depart posthaste for the shipyards, immediately demanded the same scale of pay. If the interior employers wanted to continue in business, they had to come through. They are paying the higher wage so that the expected influx of skilled mechanics to the coast shipyards is not materializing.

But the effect of the last ten per cent increase has been even worse. It has lifted the remuneration of the shipyard and metal workers to such heights that the less fortunate workers in other lines became increasingly dissatisfied. It is not in human nature to bless the good fortune which is increasing the income of your neighbor $50 to $75 a month while your own income has risen only $15 a month. This general discontent cut down production and output in every line throughout the Far West. A few far-sighted employers, knowing the inevitable effect of discontent upon production, met the situation by increasing the wage scale voluntarily. Unfortunately many employers are not far-sighted or, if they are, they are not in a position to give increased wages

unless all their competitors do likewise. Therefore production in all lines throughout the Far West remained below normal until the average level of wages throughout the West had gone up.

As the result of these strikes and the wage board's decisions, the wages paid in the navy yards at Mare Island and Bremerton, and in the shipyards of the Atlantic Coast compared as follows in January, 1918:

COMPARISON OF SHIPYARD WAGES

Trade	Atlantic Coast	Pacific Coast Navy Yards*	Pacific Coast Private Yards†
Acetylene Welders	$4.24	$5.28	$5.80
Boiler-makers	4.88	5.28	5.80
Caulkers	4.72	6.48	7.15
Drillers	3.84	4.24	4.62
Electricians	4.88	5.28	5.80
Machinists	4.88	5.28	5.80
Molders	4.88	5.28	5.80
Painters	4.16	5.04	5.50
Pattern-makers	4.88	6.48	7.15
Riveters	4.40	5.28	5.80
Rivet Heaters	2.24	2.80	3.46
Sheet Metal Workers	4.88	6.00	6.60
Shipfitters	4.88	5.28	5.80
Shipwrights	4.88	6.00	6.60

Study this table a little while, especially the last column. It must be a poor mechanic who, with overtime at time and a half, can't bring home $35 to $50 at the end of every week. Also please remember that the Pacific Coast worker needs less fuel, less heavy clothing and underwear, fewer pairs of shoes, that he has a cheap and abundant supply of fresh vegetables and fruits the year around, that his rent, light, gas and food all cost him less than the snow-bound worker of the Atlantic Coast has to pay.

Most assuredly the Pacific Coast metal workers did not receive higher wages because it costs them more to live. If wages were based on the cost of living, the western navy-yard workers would all have quit the big plants at Mare Island and Bremerton to seek employment in the private shipyards at higher wages. The very fact that they stayed proves conclusively that the navy-yard wages were ample to take care of the increased cost of living.

Yet nobody, not even the stingiest employer, would begrudge these union mechanics these very high wages if the union workers

*Note.—The wages enumerated under the heading "Navy Yards" are the maximum rates for the best mechanics. The slower and less efficient men are placed in two lower grades with a minimum wage of $1.04 less per day than the maximum used in this table.

†Note.—The rates here quoted constitute the minimum wage any union mechanic irrespective of ability must receive. The navy yards pay straight wages for the first two hours' overtime. The private yards pay time and a half.

had given an honest, full day's work for a full day's pay. Here are a few more instances of what was then going on:

A house carpenter went to work in the yards. He was given the job of putting up brackets to support the ceiling in a boat approaching completion. He put up three brackets the first morning. At noon the shop steward of the union came, looked in and shook his head disapprovingly.

An example of shipyard energy which unfortunately is not typical of conditions

"Put up all those this morning?" he inquired.

"Well, three ain't so very much for half a day," apologized the carpenter, "but I'll do better when I get used to the work."

"Do better?" sneered the steward. "Say, if you put up another bracket today you'll get canned. Take a walk around, but don't forget that three is a day's work."

Of another joiner working on the inside of a hull it is reported that he tore down in the afternoon that which he had put up in

the morning, thus managing to stretch a four days' job into seventeen.

Circumstantial, detailed stories of riveting gangs snoozing peacefully during half the night shift are told by indignant workers.

Surely low wages could not be blamed for the low output. On the contrary, the Pacific Coast was then going through an experience similar to that which befell England in the first year of the war when doubled shipyard earnings caused the men to work only half the usual time. This disturbing effect of extraordinary wages was recognized by the Shipping Board when its members, yielding to the pressure of the unions, granted a second increase of ten per cent and made this increase a bonus payable only to men who worked eight hours a day and six days a week. Unfortunately the increase became unconditional in February.

If wages, hours and conditions were more than satisfactory, what held back production in those days of stress?

Perhaps I am mistaken, but as I analyze the situation, the principal cause of the abnormally low output, aside from shortage of steel, poor management and inexperience, was to be found in the spirit and the methods of the organized iron-workers' leaders, a spirit which, through the radical minority in the rank and file, was able to permeate all the affected unions.

These leaders, men like McGuire, Burton, Flaherty, Taylor, Atwood and others, had for years been directing the incessant trench warfare between their unions and the employers. It was their work. They got paid for keeping as many union men as possible employed at the highest possible wages, and to keep this maximum employed it was necessary that those on the payroll should not perform too much work.

It is a fascinating and often remunerative game these union leaders are playing. It is the breath and the staff of their lives; in it they live, move and have their being. The union, what can be done with, for and through the union, fills their waking hours and limits their horizon. The more they can obtain for the union, the greater will be the members' loyalty and the reward of the leaders. Therefore the big, close-up fact of the union overshadowed for a time even the bigger fact of the world war.

In the organized iron trades of the Pacific Coast the radicals are in the saddle. They will listen to no compromise talk. Peace based on annexations and indemnities is their motto. They have the employers—and the country—at their mercy. It is their deliberate policy to keep on lifting up wages. This radical minority does not hesitate to use threats and intimidation to enforce its will.

It is only on the Pacific Coast that the unions in the metal trades dominate the field; in most of the eastern industrial centers the "open shop" prevails and restrictions of the Pacific Coast variety are practically unknown. To find a parallel case one must look to Great Britain during the first year of the war.

Lloyd George ran full tilt into the elaborate structure of rules and regulations, all designed to keep the maximum number of union men employed, when the frantic call for more shells, more guns, more airplanes, more trucks, came from across the channel. By Act of Parliament, agreed to by all parties, the unions included, Lloyd George tore down at one sweep the entire union code and set production free.

Had the British union rules and regulations remained in full force, it would have been utterly impossible to supply the guns, the shells, the ships, the trucks, the ammunition and the powder in sufficient quantities to save France.

Around San Francisco bay many of the union rules and regulations, nearly all of them designed on the British model, are still in full force and effect.

Idle pattern-makers are as scarce as gorillas in North Dakota. Every shop and shipyard clamors for more of them, yet in San Francisco the pattern-makers were not allowed to work overtime. A union rule forbade it. This rule states that overtime work is permissible only "for the preservation of life and property." Apparently this union believes that the country has gone to war to give a million American soldier boys a chance to have a gay time in Paris and London.

"Dilution of labor" is a phrase constantly recurring in the reports of the British minister of munitions. It means that hundreds of thousands of women and unskilled men have been trained to do work which before the war was reserved exclusively for full-fledged union men. In the San Francisco district this dilution is not allowed by many craft unions. In the yards constructing wooden ships the shipwrights' union insists that every operation on the hull and the rigging be performed by skilled union mechanics. It requires no training at all to carry the thousands of wooden pins with which the planks are fastened to the frame from the place of manufacture to the hull, but the union insists that this carrying be done by mechanics receiving $6.80 a day. The driving of these pins is a simple operation, so simple that any man can learn it in a few days. Skilled shipwrights able to do the difficult technical part of ship-construction cannot be found in sufficient numbers, yet in the San Francisco district green labor cannot be used to do the mechanical work of hitting wooden pins with a mallet, of nailing copper sheets to the hull. In the Pacific Northwest special men, most of them

graduates from the ranks of unskilled labor, perform these easy tasks, but in the San Francisco district none but full union shipwrights may touch the material. They even tried to bar union house-carpenters from the shipyards in their effort to maintain a complete monopoly for the handful of union ship-carpenters, but P. H. McCarthy, head of the building trades' unions, smashed through the wall and obtained a free field for his men.

Ship-carpenters received $6.60 for eight hours and double pay for overtime. The special men employed in the northwestern yards to drive the pins and do other work requiring practically no training earned $4.50 a day, but the San Francisco unions barred them. It follows that the wooden-ship builder of San Francisco is penalized by higher labor costs. Hence the wooden-ship industry has made little progress in the San Francisco districts, while its growth in Oregon and Washington has been enormous.

This is a war of shop against shop, of factory against factory. The man in the shop at home is fully as important as the man in the European trenches, but the fighter in the shop risks neither life, limb nor comfort for thirty dollars a month. To win the war, both the soldier abroad and the worker at home must put forth their best efforts. A disorganized, sullen, mutinous army cannot win, whether this army be at the front or in the factories. If the employer is at fault, take the plant away from him. If short-sighted labor-leaders stand in the way, push them aside. No one must be allowed to interfere with production while the war lasts.

CHAPTER XI

WAGES AND OUTPUT

He graduated from a Seattle high school and went to work in a big office, beginning humbly 'way down at the bottom. His "salary" was five dollars a week. Within a few months he became restless. Every youngster of his acquaintance was sporting grimy hands, forty-dollar suits and a motorcycle. When one of them was pinched for speeding and fined twenty-five dollars, the boy peeled the bills from a fat roll, handed them over and walked out, grinning. The fine didn't worry him. He was working in the shipyards.

So at last the boy in the office also took the plunge. He applied for a job at a yard, and, being husky, was put to work. The first day in the yards he earned nearly his full week's office "salary."

In Tacoma a father and two sons are working in the shipyards. For a year their combined wages have reached a thousand dollars a month

Caulkers working on wooden ships for a long time pocketed twelve dollars a day and seventeen dollars on Sunday. It's a mighty poor kid of eighteen who can't bring home ninety or a hundred a month and the mechanic who, with overtime and holiday trimmings, can't run his pay envelope up to forty-five or fifty dollars a week is lacking in ambition. All the elevator "boys" around Puget Sound wear skirts, the jewelry stores are doing a remarkable business, the furniture houses can't keep up with the demand and scores of automobiles are lined up day and night in front of the shipyards for their owners in overalls. Also at noon the gates are infested with agents, five and ten at a time having brand new machines with them. They sell them, too. One skilled steel worker earning twenty-five dollars a day purchased and kept three cars in a year—and was put out of the house he bought on instalments because he did not keep up his payments. Yet the bank deposits are growing and the Puget Sound Liberty Bond subscriptions barely lowered the savings reservoir an inch or two.

Beyond all question the shipbuilding boom has brought unexampled prosperity to Seattle, a prosperity which, thank God, is percolating most freely through the ranks of the wage earners, so freely that hundreds of able-bodied college graduates, teachers, budding lawyers and doctors have abandoned their lean, white-collared dignity for the opulent overalls.

For the whipped cream on this prosperity pie the workers owe thanks to the shipbuilding firm of Skinner & Eddy, more espe-

cially to D. E. Skinner, presiding genius of the concern, promoter, financier and lumberman. He applied the match that set off the skyrocket of rising wages. His policy brought about the introduction of the six-dollar-a-day wage scale in the Puget Sound shipyards and shops. From Puget Sound this wage scale spread all along the Pacific Coast, jumped clear across the continent to the Atlantic shipyards.

Late in 1915 D. E. Skinner, watching the growth of the submarine depredations, noticing the tremendous demand for tonnage, began to scent the shipbuilding boom and determined to get in on the ground floor. British and Norwegian orders were swamping the established yards; all the old hulks had left their cozy beds on the mud flats and were making fortunes for their owners; every week marine freight rates and tonnage values advanced another notch. Down in San Francisco Mayor James H. Rolph had made a painless million merely by signing contracts for the construction of new ships which he sold at a profit before they were completed. There was big money in the shipbuilding business for the man with capital and courage. Skinner had both.

To establish a shipyard three elements were needed: a site on tidewater, sufficient raw material and, above all things, an organization of skilled and experienced men. It was easy to get the site. Steel at that time was still to be had at reasonable prices and it is reported that the Skinner & Eddy yard contracted for large amounts at comparatively low figures.

But when it came to the instantaneous building of an organization, conditions were different. There had never been a very large number of skilled ship workers on the Pacific Coast. In the Puget Sound district they had been able to find employment only at the Bremerton Navy Yard and in the plant of the Seattle Construction and Drydock Company. Of course there were large numbers of skilled mechanics in the machine shops and other manufacturing plants of Puget Sound, but these men would decline to leave their employment unless special inducements could be offered them.

Now it appears that the metal-working establishments of Puget Sound for years have been operated on the "open-shop" basis. Though many of the shops employed union members by the score and by the hundred, they refused to sign agreements for the exclusive employment of union men and they declined to introduce the uniform union scale of wages. As a result there was constant and open warfare between the forces of the "open" and of the "closed" shop, with the open-shop army victorious all down the line.

In its great saw mill at Port Blakely the firm of Skinner & Eddy had consistently opposed the unions, operating and defending the "open shop."

For the sake of obtaining an experienced shipbuilding organization in a hurry, Skinner departed from his open-shop policy. To superintend the plant he was creating, he had hired David Rodgers, formerly in a like position with the Seattle Construction and Drydock Company, an open-shop concern. Rodgers had for a brother-in-law Dan McKillop, business agent of the boilermakers' and shipworkers' union. A strike had been called in the Seattle Construction yard to unionize the plant, and this strike was being fought bitterly by the company. Taking advantage of all these conditions, Skinner & Eddy made a pact with the unions to run a strictly union, "closed-shop" shipyard and agreed to a wage scale considerably in advance of the rates then current.

When the Skinner & Eddy yard began operations early in 1916, it applied the selective draft to every establishment in Seattle. The skilled mechanics of the Seattle Construction and Drydock Company were taken over almost in a body. The unions, anxious to drive a wedge deep into the ranks of the open-shop forces, coöperated with a will. Within a short time the new yard was going full blast.

Other yards came into existence. In order to obtain mechanics they were obliged to follow the Skinner & Eddy course and make agreements with the unions stipulating that none but union men should be employed. Even the old established yard had to strike its colors and abandon the open-shop policy to keep running.

When all the shipyards were completely unionized, Skinner & Eddy had lost their initial advantage. To hold their men, to obtain needed new ones they must offer attractive inducements in the form of higher compensation. They began to raise wages, to entice men from other establishments by offers of higher pay. Three times a certain plant filled its blacksmith shop with mechanics, three times they quit and went over to Skinner & Eddy. Stealing men became a fine art. The entire industrial fabric became frazzled at the edges. Like prospectors hearing of a new strike, men threw down their tools at the slightest provocation to stampede elsewhere for a little higher pay.

Nor did Skinner & Eddy quit raising the ante. They kept on giving it a lift despite the plea of their competitors, who begged them not to carry the process of demoralization farther. Bitter feeling grew up against Skinner personally; for a while he was shunned by many of his former associates, who pointedly avoided all contact with him. But the game went on until Skinner & Eddy paid a wage of six dollars for eight hours.

Up and down the Pacific Coast union officials pointed to the Skinner & Eddy rate with demands for equally high pay. To obtain this pay, strikes involving 50,000 shipworkers and lasting two or three weeks occurred last fall in California, Oregon and Washington. When the Federal Wage Adjustment Board settled the strikes, it declined to accept the six-dollar scale as the standard for the Pacific Coast and fixed $5.25 as a just and liberal average, but union pressure shortly induced the Emergency Fleet Corporation to lift this rate ten per cent to $5.80. A few months later the wage scale in all the shipyards of the Atlantic Coast was increased proportionately.

I have yet to see the employer who objects to the size of the wages he is paying. Not one of the Puget Sound shipbuilders expressed a desire to reduce wages, but they all emphasized the vital need of obtaining for the abnormally high wages at least a normal day's output. This normal day's output they were not able to obtain for a long time.

The riveting gang determines absolutely the speed at which a ship shall be built. Given an adequate supply of steel, it is comparatively easy to put this material in proper condition to be put together by the riveters. The average standardized ship of 8800 deadweight tons contains approximately 540,000 rivets. The length of time required to drive this half million rivets absolutely governs the progress of work on the entire ship. The rate of this progress depends upon two factors, the number of riveting gangs employed and the number of rivets they will or can drive per hour. The maximum number of gangs is determined by the compressed-air equipment of the yard and the supply of available riveters; the number of rivets driven in a given time by the gangs depends upon the skill, experience and industry of the worker.

Before the present shipbuilding boom it was assumed that any yard driving an average of 300 perfect rivets per gang in eight hours counting in all the rivets from the easiest to the hardest, was doing its work with reasonable efficiency. Not one Seattle yard had reached the 250-rivet mark in March. Four of the five steelship yards in January averaged from 200 rivets downward per gang in eight hours. One of them dropped below 170 rivets per gang, did not reach 60 per cent of what should be the normal output. Yet Seattle held the record for launching and completing a steamer in the shortest time.

What was the reason for this abnormally low production at a time when maximum output per man was vitally needed?

Shortage of material, said the labor-union spokesmen. They were right, in part. A great many delays occurred through the non-arrival of steel, and quite often the formen, afraid to lose

their crews, kept them on the payroll when there was little to do temporarily, but this condition was remedied rapidly. It was not nearly as bad as it was late in the summer of 1917, and in January it had only a minor effect upon the production of the Seattle yards.

Undoubtedly it is true that a large factor responsible for the low output was the employment of inexperienced men. In 1915 there were barely enough experienced riveters to go around. In 1917, when the war program began, the demand exceeded the supply three or four times. Though riveters by the hundred were taken out of the building trades, it was necessary to promote helpers, to break in new and inexperienced men by the score in every yard and the poor showing of these beginners pulled down the general average.

Inefficient or inexperienced foremen, lack of the right system, mistakes in management, all helped to reduce the output, yet all these factors combined are not sufficient to explain the enormous discrepancy between peace production and war-time output. Perhaps the experience of a yard in the Pacific Northwest which has closely watched the output in all departments month by month will help to explain the phenomenon.

In August, 1917, the average wage paid in this yard, including every employee from the youngest apprentice to the oldest foreman, amounted to 39.7 cents per hour. During that month the average amount of steel handled and worked up in the shop aggregated 10.6 tons per man employed.

In September the Federal Wage Adjustment Board lifted the wage scale. As a result the average wage in December had risen from 39.7 to 46.4 cents per hour, but the amount of steel worked up dropped from 10.6 tons per month to 8.96 tons.

In December another 10 per cent increase was granted the men, lifting the average wage to 53.3 cents per hour in January. That month the production per man dropped still further to 8.92 tons.

Between August and January the average riveter's wage rose forty per cent. In the same period the number of rivets driven per gang in eight hours *dropped from an average of 277 in August to 221 in January.*

In this period the organization of the yard was not appreciably enlarged. The new men who had been taken on during spring and early summer were becoming better trained every week. No serious shortage of material occurred either in December or January. What, then, can be the reason for the decline in production?

Human nature principally. Any business man will readily admit that his hardest fighting is done when the concern is struggling for a toe-hold among its competitors, when the com-

bat for orders, for credit, for customers and capital is going full blast. Once the concern is solidly established, has accumulated a surplus and an array of faithful customers who stand without hitching, the lunch hour expands, the golf links call and the open road lures. Only the exceptional man lengthens his stride, his pace and his hours when his income increases and his position becomes assured.

Unconsciously, without knowing it, the average worker is doing what the average business man does under similar circumstances. He eases off a little as the pressure decreases, as his thoughts turn to new interests made possible by larger earnings. It is thus not only in the Pacific Northwest but everywhere in the country; suddenly increased earnings have been followed by a general though unconscious slackening of the pace.

In England, France and Italy the output increased tremendously, the gait was speeded almost to the limit of endurance because these countries heard the roar of cannon, saw children torn by aerial bombs, had the actualities of war brought into every individual home. Over here the war for a long time was more or less an academic subject really touching only those who had given a son or a brother to the cause of democracy. For wide strata of the population the war was merely an incident like the destruction of Messina or a famine in India, deplorable but having little meaning to them personally.

In the Puget Sound district this academic aloofness was best illustrated by the attitude of many labor union officials toward the war. H. M. Wells was charged with obstructing the draft law while he was president of the Seattle Central Labor Council. He was tried, convicted and sentenced in the United States District Court, whereupon the Central Labor Council appointed a committee to "investigate" the proceedings that led to Wells' conviction.

The union musicians and stage employees resented this action of the Labor Council. So they passed a resolution declaring their opposition "against the Central Labor Council taking any part in secret or public investigations which will in any manner appear as though they were interceding with this government in its activities to brand disloyalty and remove discontent." When this resolution was submitted to the Central Labor Council, that body consigned it promptly to the waste paper basket, but not before James Duncan, secretary of the Council, had a chance to defend the principles of trade unionism.

Deploring the attacks upon the patriotism of the Central Labor Council, attacks coming from the ranks of the unions themselves, he asserted, according to a Socialist Seattle paper, that "*where there is no unionism there is no patriotism, for unionism*

is the highest form of patriotism," thus branding the ninety per cent of American workers who do not belong to unions as devoid of patriotism.

"You can't do your bit for your country if you can't do your bit for your union," declared Duncan, while the delegates cheered.

What did Duncan mean when he proclaimed that adherence to union principles was the highest form of patriotism? Did he mean the "closed shop," the limitation of apprentices, the rigid division of tasks among the crafts with its resulting jurisdictional disputes, the unwritten but nevertheless effective limitation of output? British labor, confronted by the realities of war, agreed to remove and did away with every known union principle in order to make maximum production possible, thus admitting that these union principles did in fact hamper and restrict output. Is it possible, did Duncan mean to say that these selfsame union principles, condemned by the greatest and most sympathetic union writers, Sydney and Beatrice Webb, had the opposite effect when applied in the shipyards and shops of Puget Sound?

A score of men operating machine shops and foundries turning out shipbuilding and war supplies in Seattle assured me that their output per man had not decreased abnormally, that their employees, both union and non-union men, were giving them faithful and loyal services. They related that, in the middle of March, the business agent of the molders' union demanded the removal of a semi-skilled man operating a molding machine efficiently and insisted upon his replacement by a full-fledged, skilled molder, making this demand in spite of a scarcity of skilled molders so great that the foundry of the largest Seattle shipyard had been unable to operate three months out of four. When the demand was refused the molders in this foundry were ordered to strike. Being sensible men, they discussed the order and declined to obey. The semi-skilled man is still operating the machine efficiently, a skilled molder is still doing badly needed work and an unnecessary strike called to enforce an obsolete union principle has been avoided, largely because the contract shops of Seattle are not under the business agents' control and deny them any authority.

Union principles, on the other hand, have full sway in all the Seattle yards building steel ships. The "closed shop" prevails; every worker must have a union card; he cannot remain employed in them without a card. I was told by more than one shipbuilder that twenty to thirty per cent of the men could be discharged without materially diminishing the output, but that such action would bring on a general strike. I was told of conditions similar to those described by Business Agent McGuire of the San Francisco boilermakers' union, of numerous shirkers, of "crap"

games and boxing bouts during working hours, though the unanimous testimony was that these glaring derelictions were practically over, that conditions were improving.

I was told by men who ought to know that the riveters in the yard which is the stronghold and citadel of the Seattle boilermakers' union in January drove the smallest average number of rivets per gang on Puget Sound, that the highest average number of rivets on Puget Sound was driven in the youngest yard located farthest from the Seattle Labor Temple. I was told of five gangs that drove *a total of twenty-two rivets in eight hours*. When discharged, the men complained to the federal employment bureau alleging that the low record they established was due to the lack of material.

In the private establishments of Puget Sound, establishments employing thousands of union men, but basing the rate of pay more or less upon individual ability, few complaints about reduced production were heard even though these establishments were being raided constantly by the shipyards. In the shipyards, however, where a flat minimum wage prevailed, where full union conditions were in force and the business agents' word was law, complaints about the lack of output on the part of the boilermakers were frequent. Did Duncan mean to say that the principles responsible for this condition are the highest form of patriotism?

The entire Northwest was short of skilled molders in March. Important war work was being delayed by this shortage, yet the Spokane union molders went on strike. They were satisfied with the standard wage of six dollars for eight hours and time and a half for overtime. They struck for the "closed shop," and they wanted a full union shop principally because they did not want to relieve the shortage by teaching their trade to others. They struck because they wanted to reduce the number of learners to one for every five journeymen irrespective of the dire need of more trained molders.

Was this the "highest form of patriotism" Duncan spoke of?

There are reasons, good reasons from the worker's point of view, for every one of the rules and practices enforced by the unions. They are all designed to prevent exploitation of the individual, to diminish competition among the men for the job, to prevent undue speeding-up, to assure the skilled man of adequate pay for his skill. These rules were all borrowed from the practices of British trade unions. The British unions have by agreement cast them aside during the war to make maximum production possible. Can the American trade union do less?

Samuel Gompers and scores of other union leaders are doing their best to bring about maximum production; the majority of

the rank and file is coöperating loyally and faithfully, but in many crafts the radical bolsheviki element, the whole-hog irreconcilable faction longing for a Russian revolution in America is in control. Where this faction is dominant it openly defies the authorities, as in British Columbia, where certain unions struck to bring about the release of a union man, charged with being a draft evader. They obtained the release of this man before his innocence or guilt had been determined, and went back to work.

Ninety per cent of the workers in the war industries of the Pacific Coast are satisfied, contented, loyal; ninety per cent of the employers are living up to the letter and spirit of the war agreement. If this ninety per cent is left undisturbed, production in the shipyards and shops will show a steady increase. The danger lies in the activities of the radical ten per cent on either side. The union-baiting employer, the capitalist who tries to disregard the spirit of the war agreement with labor, will have his plant taken from him by the government. It is comparatively easy to make him toe the mark.

How about controlling the activities of the radical minority on the other side? It can be done. Public sentiment is overwhelmingly against them, just as public sentiment is against the profiteer and labor exploiter. Whatever firm, drastic steps the government may choose to take against the ultra-radicals on either side will be supported strongly by that great mass of the American people whose one aim is to win the war.

CHAPTER XII

LABOR MONOPOLIES AND THEIR RESULTS

The wooden-ship program has had as many ups and downs as an active elevator, as much grief as Job and as clean a rise as Goethals had at Panama. For a while the nations hoped that half of the bridge of ships across the Atlantic would be built of wood; a little while later, when William Denman and General Goethals made the bark fly, the wooden-ship program dropped out of sight behind the stormy horizon. There it stayed so far as public interest was concerned. When the nation began to realize the desperate need of ships, be they steel, wood, composite or concrete, the material which taught men the art of navigation came into its own again.

It is mighty fortunate that the wooden-ship builders of the Pacific Coast, more especially of Oregon and Washington, did not lose heart in the discouraging days of 1917. They went ahead irrespective of the controversy over the merits and demerits of wooden ships. They started to build them anyway and their product is now proving to be of incalculable value. Even if the wooden ships are not the decisive factor in the world conflict, they may be the commercial salvation of the Pacific Coast ports, for it is in wooden vessels that these ports must carry on their export and import trade next year. Every available steel vessel most certainly will be pressed into the Atlantic service when it becomes necessary to keep a million and a half American boys in France supplied with food, ammunition and equipment.

It is certain that no suitable steamers plying the Pacific under the American flag will remain there very long. Therefore the Pacific ports will have to rely largely on the new wooden fleet now building on every nook and inlet.

It took the wooden yards a long time to find their stride. They were three to six months behind the schedule of deliveries early in 1918. When contracts dropped out of the Washington sky like hail, those who rushed out with buckets to garner the crop underestimated the difficulty of getting started. They did not realize that it takes time to cut timber for shipbuilding, that it takes more time to build and equip the yard, that an organization of shipbuilders cannot be produced like a rabbit out of a silk hat, that the makers of boilers and engines might fall down on their part of the job. Yet the builders might have overcome the obstacles, their delay might be measured in weeks instead of months, but for the long succession of strikes in 1917.

The I. W. W. started the dance. In July they called out the timber workers throughout the Pacific Northwest. Fifty thousand men responded, and many of them did not return to work until October. Even after they returned their output was far below normal. In many camps and mills it took six months to restore the usual pace, and in the meantime the big ship timbers came forth all too slowly.

Thereafter the wooden-ship workers themselves struck, staying out from four to six weeks. When they returned, the mechanics in the boiler and machine shops and foundries struck for three weeks, delaying the completion of the engines, shafts and other metal equipment. In addition it took time to train the twelve thousand new men recruited for the Northwestern shipyards, and while they were in training their output was necessarily low.

Most of the labor troubles in the wooden-ship yards of the Pacific Coast were settled amicably before Christmas, 1917. Only the caulkers held out stubbornly, and for a while their obstinate resistance was such a menace to the entire program that the Shipping Board in February, 1918, considered it necessary publicly to denounce the attitude of the caulkers' organization.

As in San Francisco, so the caulkers' unions of the Columbia river and the Puget Sound districts constituted a closed corporation. No caulkers were to be had outside of the union. In the State of Washington the union would allow no apprentices except one in each yard. As there were only two wooden-ship yards in the state before the boom came, the number of boys learning the caulker's trade was microscopically small.

Nevertheless it was large enough for the needs of the craft. The building of wooden ships was dying. The caulkers were chronically out of work. Few of them managed to put in more than two weeks' labor a month and, until the war came, there seemed to be no chance of ever reviving the industry. The younger, more active men abandoned the caulkers' trade and went into new, more promising lines of activity. The older men, unable or unwilling to make a new start in life, stayed in the trade and thanked Providence for the organization which kept up the wage, kept out competition and gave each caulker a fair chance to share in the small amount of available work.

When Mars waved his sword and shipyards began to sprout out of the tide flats by the dozen, the total number of caulkers in the Puget Sound district did not exceed 125, all members of the union. No longer did they sit around in headquarters waiting for a call to come. Every last one of them was steadily employed, and almost every evening the foremen of the new yards stood at the gates of the older ones with offers of higher pay for experienced men, especially caulkers. Wages went up rapidly

from five to six, to seven, to eight dollars a day. Men who had quit caulking for other lines came back to the trade and rejoined the union. By early fall the membership had grown to 180 without, however, satisfying the growing demand.

Looking ahead the shipyard owners saw trouble coming. By February, 1918, they would need 300 caulkers; in March they would need 350; in April they would need 100 more; by May it would require the services of more than 600 caulkers to tighten the seams of the new wooden fleet. Where was this number to come from?

They presented the situation to the caulkers' union. The union amended its by-laws. Instead of one apprentice per yard, it allowed *two*. Also it agreed that every union caulker should work ten hours instead of eight, the last two hours to be paid for at double the normal rate; in addition the caulkers who cared to do so might work on Sundays at double the usual rate.

By fall of 1917, the bidding of one yard against the other had carried the caulkers' wages to $8.40 for eight hours. Since nearly all of them were working ten hours and many of them labored on Sunday, their earnings rose to $12.60 a day, to $16.80 on Sundays, to $92.40 for the full work of seven days, though the shipbuilders allege that the output in ten hours did not increase perceptibly over the eight-hour day. And every week the shortage in the supply of caulkers increased.

To increase this supply, the shipyard owners requested that each caulker teach his trade to a helper, thus doubling the number in six or eight weeks. The caulkers declined. They pointed out that such a course would multiply the number of caulkers far beyond the need of normal times and might deprive them of their daily bread, whereupon the employers pointed out that exactly the same condition existed among the ship carpenters, the molders, riveters, machinists, in every trade engaged in building ships. They showed that the United States would be bound hand and foot if every union had adopted the same attitude, that the expansion of any war industry would be absolutely impossible if the mechanics decided to bar any newcomers who might compete with the old men for the jobs after the war. But the caulkers' union, all arguments notwithstanding, stood pat.

To relieve the immediate shortage, the union officials suggested that the caulkers in the Mississippi Valley, about a hundred in number, be brought to Puget Sound. This the government would not allow, as the men would be needed on the Altantic and Gulf Coasts. Thus the deadlock continued until the caulkers' union receded from its position and offered to have each caulker teach the trade to a helper, provided the caulker received extra pay for the instructions in addition to the usual wage.

This offer the employers declined. They were afraid of the effect of still higher compensation upon the other classes of mechanics in the yards. Already the carpenters were grumbling at the high wages received by the caulkers, growling because they had fought for the eight-hour day while the caulkers were working ten.

In January, 1918, when several ships were completed but could not be launched because they were not caulked, the situation became acute and the Shipping Board interceded. In February the yard owners took the bull by the horns, restored the eight-hour day and returned to the wage rate fixed by the federal adjustment board, $7.15 a day, whereupon the caulkers struck.

This strike and the increased shortage of caulkers aroused the carpenters' union. If this shortage was not remedied, by-and-by more than half the ways would be crowded with completed ships which could not be launched because they were not caulked, no new keels could be laid on these ways, the industry would slow down and two-thirds of the carpenters would be without jobs. To forestall such a calamity and to help the vital shipbuilding program, the union carpenters assured the employers and the Shipping Board that they were ready to caulk the ships irrespective of the caulkers' union, to furnish experienced caulkers to act as teachers and carpenters to learn the trade.

When the caulkers realized that a seventeen-inch shell had hit their bomb-proof monopoly, they gave in. Each caulker took an apprentice to learn the trade. They went even further. They agreed to let all those parts of the work requiring little skill, such as spinning the oakum, be done by common labor, confining their own task to the work requiring skill and experience.

On the Columbia river the shipbuilders had a similar experience with the caulkers' union, whose members also believed that their individual welfare was of greater importance than the fate of the country. They also refused to divulge the mysteries of the craft to outsiders, but they likewise climbed on the band wagon after one of the largest wooden yards opened a caulking school with over a hundred pupils.

These caulkers were not intentionally unpatriotic. Many of them had sons or brothers in the army, practically all of them bought Liberty Bonds and joined the Red Cross. But the fear of the future was upon them; for many years the union had enabled them to get higher wages, to maintain a monopoly in their trade, to equalize the opportunities for work. The union had been their shield and their buckler, the heavy armor protecting them from the blows of inexorable economic law. When the great emergency arose the big fact of their union was ever so close to their eyes that they could not see the bigger fact of the

Though the number of caulkers was far too low to take care of the new wooden fleet, the union refused to surrender its caulking monopoly until forced to. The San Francisco caulkers' union was maintaining its job monopoly till late in 1918.

war and its urgent needs. Only when they realized that the regulations of the union were as a straw in a tidal wave did they bow to the inevitable.

The shipwrights of the Pacific Coast found themselves in a position analogous to that of the caulkers. Theirs was a dying trade carried on largely by older men making a precarious living, maintaining a monopoly of their craft because no one disputed it with them. When the wooden-ship contracts began to drop like manna from heaven, the shipwrights' unions of the Northwest for a short while looked upon the hordes of house and bridge carpenters with jaundiced eyes, resenting their swarming entry into the domain that had been the shipwrights' undisputed property for many years. But the feeling soon passed away, the men joined hands irrespective of training and affiliation and went at the task with a will. At least in the Northwest they did. In San Francisco they acted otherwise.

"It has repeatedly come to the attention of your general officers in the past few months that building tradesmen, with a perfectly good paid-up book of many years' standing and a current quarterly working card of this council, cannot secure steady or permanent employment in the shipyards.

"Able, faithful, self-sacrificing and willing, they stand ready to help build the ships which are needed to bridge the Atlantic in numbers sufficient to safely transport men, munitions and provisions to drive the enemy back to its lairs, if not to its senses.

"But certain local unions and their members seem to raise the old jurisdictional objection; in place of welcoming union men, they look for green and raw recruits and initiative fees.

"That seems to be a part of the same spirit which actuates the profiteers, and not the kind of loyalty to the cause, the government and the nation which should be expected of good union men.

"At present there are thousands of builders, artisans, mechanics and laborers idle in California, and, in the coming year, their numbers will increase. A few of them found employment on the reinforced concrete ships, but reinforced concrete construction of ships is still in the experimental stage.

"By all that is humanitarian and by all that we hope, let it not be said that the jurisdictional disputes are hampering war work. That would be the most wretched American citizenship and the greatest comfort to the enemy."

These are not the words of a "plutocratic hireling." The paragraphs here quoted are from the annual address of O. A. Tveitmoe, secretary of the California State Building Trades' Council, in convention assembled on March 19, 1918, and they refer to the efforts made by the union shipwrights to keep union

house carpenters out of the San Francisco district shipyards, both steel and wood. The methods used by one set of union men to keep another set of union men away from this most important war work are clearly set forth in the following communication written by a loyal San Francisco union member.

"These are some of the principles of Unionism that the Government is up against at the present time in regard to the shipbuilding industry and in particular the shipwright, carpenter and joiner work on the ships and in the shipyards.

"This branch of the union is controlled by the Maritime Bay District Council of carpenters and joiners.

"As you may know the United States has not been a ship-producing nation. Our merchant marine had all but gone to the dogs, and as a result of these conditions there were no trained shipbuilders in the country. The scant few that were on the Pacific Coast were hardly enough to form a skeleton crew for one-third of the yards in existence. Now at that time the shipwrights had a small union or, I should say, a closed corporation. They had no apprentice system, neither did they have any known way of perpetuating their craft.

"The result was that when there was a call for shipbuilders they were totally unprepared to meet this new situation.

"The only thing they had was their union. At first they did did not know just what to do. They could not do the work demanded of them and they did not want any one else to do it. They tried to hold up, but it was no use, so they opened their doors very grudgingly and took in a few members from the uptown unions. They took in all that had any training at shipbuilding until most all of the semi-experienced men were in their union. Then there being no more with experience they closed their doors, and said to the mechanics from all other wood-working crafts: 'We will not let you work unless you are a regular ship carpenter.' Get that?

"Still the demand for men increased. The employer had to have his work done and he couldn't get men from the shipwrights' union, so he started to employ house carpenters, and I think he was very agreeably surprised to find that they could do anywhere from 50 to 100 per cent more work in a day than the old ship carpenter with his dull saws, rusty chisels and generally inferior tools could do in a day. That hurt the ship caprenter very much. He got scared and made up his mind 'that something had to be done.' The 'dirty house jack,' as the house carpenter is very contemptuously called by him, must be stopped or he would have all the work completed and he, the ship carpenter, would be out of a job and would have to go back to bench warming or, far worse, scow building; so they started to discourage

fast workers. Of course they didn't find that hard work, as most any man will work easy when he can, especially if he knows there is no danger of being canned or fired. Still, with it all work kept increasing, the demands for men got to be one steady call, house carpenters kept demanding admittance to the local, and there didn't seem to be any way to stop taking them into the local, but one meeting night a way was devised to stop the influx of house carpenters, to-wit:

"When the house carpenter went out and got a job in the shipyard there would be a permit issued by the shipwrights' business agent. The permit would call for the signatures of skilled shipwrights, who must have known you were a real bona fide shipwright and be able to swear that you had served your time at the trade. It also was fixed so that no shipwright in the yard in which you worked could sign your permit, and be it also known that if anybody signed your permit and it was found out that you were not a real shipwright, the gentleman who kindly let you have the use of his name was to be fined $50.

"Now you will notice that all of the existing shipwrights were employed and in the union. They had no apprentice system and there being a scarcity of that kind of work before the war, there was no way for any more shipwrights to be had. No member could sign your application card, and if you were lucky enough to have it signed, the examining board with their trick questions would trip you up. Anyway and as a result they had you coming and going.

"Still, with work increasing all the time those miserable 'house jacks' kept getting into the shipyards till they almost outnumbered the shipwrights. It was finally decided that no more mechanics could go out and seek work from the yards. The employer must come to the union headquarters and get his men from there. No foreman could employ any one in the capacity of shipwright unless he came through the shop, and to come through there you would have to have a regular shipwright's union card, and no house carpenter could get a job from that shop unless he had a permit from the business agent to work as a shipwright, and that could not be had unless the business agent knew that all shipwrights were at work. If any foreman employed any outside man he was fined.

"If you will stop and think for a minute you will see how completely this law of the union shut out any other mechanic who might wish to go to work in the shipyards at that particular trade. There was one labor leader who saw these things and he put up a real good fight against them. P. H. McCarthy, of the Building Trades' Council, knew that those principles were not and never could be good union principles. So he made up his

mind that those things must stop. He proceeded to get busy with the big man in the East, with the result that the shipwrights had to come to terms. Just one instance will be sufficient to explain why an agreement was so necessary.

"I was working in a shipyard. Unfortunately I did not have a shipwright's card, although my card was issued by the Maritime Bay District Council, but it was from a *shipjoiners'* local. Some other mechanics working with me were regular carpenters from the Building Trades Unions. There were four shipwrights on the job, that is, there were four shipwrights' cards, but only one real bona fide shipwright. The other three were would-be's. They decided they would not work with us, as we did not have our permits, so they sent one of their number over to us, all Americans mind you, to inform us that we would have to lay off work, as we had no permits to work as shipwrights. Unfortunately the one they chose to do the dirty work happened to be a German with his first papers only. I may add that we all stayed right there and worked and they didn't walk off the job. Reason prevailed. However, they still have a strangle-hold and it is a very hard thing for a house carpenter to get a job in a shipyard, for he cannot get in until all shipwrights are employed.

"I know of one case where four men waited for a whole day before they could get permits to go to work. They had jobs and it cost them one day's pay to sit in the headquarters keeping chairs warm waiting for some one to show up who could issue permits to them. I know of another case where four men had to wait till between eight and nine o'clock at night before they could find a business agent to give them permits to go to work on their regular work. I have worked on my present job several months and a fellow-worker and myself had to wait till next morning before we could get our monthly permit to work. Mind you, the business agent was on the job that day and it would not have taken him a half hour to go to the men that had no permits and issue same to them. However, he did nothing of the kind. It cost me two and a half hours pay to get that permit. It cost the government two and a half hours' labor and time through one man being off the job. Not that one case has any importance, but taken as a whole the men lose a great deal of time and money and the government loses all that time and work that ought to be done.

"I think that the conditions that I have tried to explain are not and can never be good union principles, and that it is very poor policy on the unions' part to practice the same principles that they so vehemently preach against. Still you will have to remember that those are the principles that are set before the laborers every day of their lives. The laborer sees nothing but

corporations and trusts gotten up for the purpose of driving competition from the field and the hogging of industries. He sees them break the laws of the land with impunity and corrupt officials beat down labor to the lowest wage and use every effort that can be brought to bear to keep him from protecting himself, and do you wonder that the laborer uses these same methods himself? You see him not only using the methods he has learned against his employers, but you see him using them against his brother laborers.

"Does the employer take the right road to protect himself? Oh, no, not big business, they will not be dictated to. They will command and lo! their commands must be obeyed. They say to the laborer: 'You stop organizing your unions and unionizing all the trades or we will stop employing you.. You must not think to have any say in regard to the conditions of your employment. You must and will take what we see fit to give you and we will be the judge of your mental and physical condition.' The result is that labor has thrown down the gauntlet and has come up to the wire ready for the fight, with the knowledge that might is one of the greatest factors in any kind of conflict; also that the preponderance of right is on their side. They have control of the labor market and now let a little reason shine forth on this blackest of problems, let the big fellows see that we are human beings and not a commodity to be bought and sold or thrown aside when they have no further use for us. We are willing to talk reason and meet them more than half way in any attempt on the employers' part to better our conditions. There is some good common sense in every man and all it needs to bring these things to the surface is just a little human understanding of the problems of both parties."

In his last paragraph the writer of this communication hits the nail right on the head. Human understanding practically applied, in the long run is a more potent cure for social ills than strikes, strike-breakers, machine guns, injunctions, pickets, dynamite, lockouts, boycotts, and all the other blood-letting devices of the industrial chamber of horrors. Far-sighted employers have long since realized this obvious truth. Among the workers recognition of the necessity to look at a problem from both sides is making headway more slowly, largely because the worker still believes that the individual employer rather than the present industrial system is deliberately and wilfully withholding from the laborer his just due. Once this belief is shattered, once the workers are convinced that the employer sincerely means to do the right thing, human understanding can begin to bridge the gulf.

In October, 1917, the Emergency Fleet Corporation ordered the Pacific Coast shipyards engaged in government work to give their employees an increase of thirty-one per cent, the increase to be retroactive for a period of several weeks. Of course the yards working on private contracts had to follow suit. One of these yards engaged in private business was losing money on every wooden steamer it was building, a condition which, astounding as it may seem, prevails to this day in quite a number of the wooden yards. The man who was running this yard decided to take his men into his confidence, so he called them together, told them how and why he was losing money and asked them whether under the circumstances they thought they should receive the back pay granted them by the Wage Board.

The men considered the question. Scores of them had forty to fifty dollars coming. It was a windfall which most of them had already spent in anticipation. They had the right to insist upon payment, but they were able and willing to see the employers' side. So they voted to relieve the owners of the obligation to pay. The owners, in turn, are figuring on dividing their future profits with the men. Things are fairly humming in that yard.

They are humming in lots of wooden yards, especially along the Columbia river. Real leaders, men with human understanding, have taken hold of the situation. They have not coddled the workers. They are not keeping the drones and shirkers, afraid to fire them. They keep the material moving through the yards at an even, steady pace: they see to it that no one need stand around because tools, timber or supplies are delayed. But these builders do not drive: they lead. They have aroused the spirit of competition between crews working on individual ships, on groups of ships, between yards in different districts. They have succeeded in making the men feel proud of their work, personally and individually responsible for the maintenance of the schedule. And they have succeeded in making their men realize the vital part their labor plays in the war.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PROBLEMS OF THE I. W. W.

In June, 1917, the farmers of the Yakima valley, in Washington, armed themselves, organized military companies, posted sentinels and guards in defense of their homes and their property.

The President had not drafted them; German submarines could not ascend the Yakima river with the salmon; neither a Mexican nor a Teuton invasion was threatened, yet the countryside waited tensely from day to day for the rattle of rifle shots, for the rising of smoke columns and the glare of burning houses that would mark the beginning of open war.

At the same time federal troops were being rushed from the peaceful Mexican border into the copper districts of Arizona where armed mobs were terrorizing the camps; in Butte, Montana, bloodshed was threatened; in the lumber camps of northern Idaho, in the ripening wheat fields of the Inland Empire, the basin of the upper Columbia, men with loaded rifles anxiously guarded their property against attacks by the lurking foe. In Colorado ominous rumblings made themselves heard in the coal mining districts where open war was being waged a few years ago. And South Dakota was calling for troops to guard the maturing wheat against the enemy. In half a dozen Far Western states the Councils of Defense were suddenly transformed into war departments to meet the emergency.

Hell and the Industrial Workers of the World had broken loose.

During the last seven or eight years the Industrial Workers of the World—commonly known as the I. W. W.—have become a major problem in the United States. The I. W. W. conducted the bloody Colorado coal strike, the bitter strikes in the iron mines of Minnesota and in the copper mines of Michigan; they closed down the textile mills of New England, the silk mills of New Jersey, the oil refineries of Bayonne; injecting themselves into the Puget Sound shingle weavers' strike, they brought about Everett's "bloody Sunday," and their activities during the so-called free-speech fights are still vivid in the minds of San Diego, Fresno, Aberdeen, Spokane and many other communities. They terrorized the Yakima valley, groups of armed I. W. W.'s capturing freight trains, burning houses and crops and even demolishing a jail in order to liberate their imprisoned comrades.

All of which brings up the question: Who are these Industrial Workers of the World? Whence came they and why? What do

they want? What magic wand gives them the evident power they wield and how can this wand be taken from them?

When Karl Marx died he was not in good standing with the International Union of Prophets and Soothsayers. His predictions had not come true. In his monumental work on the nature and function of capital, the work that became the bible of the Socialists, he had confidently foretold the death of the middle classes. According to Marx the small merchant, the small manufacturer, the small shopkeeper and the small capitalist were all doomed to speedy extinction. He was sure about it. They simply couldn't escape the axe. The inexorable economic laws discovered by Marx would ruthlessly, mercilessly operate to create ever larger aggregations of capital controlled by ever fewer men; these swollen capitalists would rapidly acquire the ownership of everything, land included, until the industrialized commonwealth consisted of only two classes, the small group that owned everything and the endless multitudes of wage workers possessed of nothing except a pair of hands and a grievance. When this condition had been attained—and it was to be reached very, very soon, according to Marx—the time was ripe for the Social Revolution. It would then be only a short, easy step for the workers to take over the huge, trustified industries and operate them for their own instead of the capitalist's benefit.

So the followers of Marx began to organize, agitate and wait for the glorious day when the hearse containing the body of the last middle-class bourgeois shop-keeper should parade through the streets on the way to the Museum of Antiquities. Unfortunately for the Marxists and their theories, the middle class turned out to be an exceedingly tough old bird. It refused to die. On the contrary, it violated all the Socialist rules and regulations by wearing an electric belt that made it grow and prosper as it had never grown and prospered before. Not one trust or combination succeeded in obtaining complete control of any industry; in fact, the unwieldy size of the great industrial combinations with few exceptions rather stimulated the growth and multiplication of small establishments with an output based on the individuality of the owner. Production of wealth grew so enormously that the middle class had to grow and expand in order to look properly after the distribution of the mass of commodities among the consumers. The green bay trees had nothing on the middle class when it came to plain and fancy flourishing after Marx founded the Socialist party that was to be its pallbearer.

To the red banner of Socialism flocked all the restless revolutionaries of the period. At last the chronic discontent of humanity, a discontent as necessary to the world's progress as gasoline

is to the propulsion of the automobile, had a gospel, a definite program based upon scientific analysis of economic forces. Lured by the vision of a material millennium held out by this economic gospel, the Socialist party in every European country reached huge proportions in an astonishingly short space of time. Within it assembled all the radicals of varying hues of red, all the idealists who hoped to blow mankind into the Porterhouse Paradise by means of bombs, all the Darwinists who added speed and an R to the doctrine of evolution, all the intellectuals who, shocked by the ocean of pain and misery that engulfed the lowest stratum of society, endeavored to cure the results of economic conditions with fire, powder and steel.

It was inevitable that sharp differences of opinion should develop in this motley crowd. Yet the party hung together surprisingly well until it gained tremendous political influence, office and responsibility.

Responsibility acts like ice applied to the hot revolutionary head. Be the radical wine ever so strong, the drinker sobers instantly when he is charged with the responsibility of keeping in motion the thousand and one activities upon which the very life of millions depends. Not so very long before the outbreak of the war a Socialist was charged with the responsibility of keeping the wheels on the French railways moving. The railroad men struck, but the Socialist cabinet member did not mount the soap box and exhort them to stand shoulder to shoulder in the fight with the capitalist oppressors. Oh, no; he did quite otherwise. He called upon the comrades to go back to work at once, immediately, instanter, if not sooner. When they declined he had the Secretary of War mobilize the entire outfit, call them to the colors and ordered them as soldiers to run the railroads. As a refusal would be insubordination, and insubordination is punishable by death in every army, the soldiering railroaders or rather the railroaded soldiers swore a great Gallic oath—and went back to work.

So, also, Lawyer Kerensky was a fire-eating Socialist of the reddest type until he felt the weight of responsibility. When he was confronted with the possibility of a German invasion into Russia's very heart, his ideas concerning the immorality of military discipline, of the death penalty and other obsolete relics changed over night.

In Germany, in France, in Italy, Sweden and Norway the Socialist party, gaining in power and responsibility, ceased for all practical purposes to be an instrument of revolution. It became a party of constructive protest and progress, keeping in mind its ultimate goal, the overthrow of the capitalist system, but in the meantime trying to obtain as many concessions, as many im-

provements in the lot of the present generation as it could squeeze out of the conservative opposition.

Of course this policy did not please the indignant scarlet faction. The ultra-reds began to mutter, to yell, to scream; before their eyes the vision of the Social Revolution, of the impending Porterhouse Paradise in which no one except maybe the expropriated capitalists would have to eat stew, vanished into the dim distance. A great many workingmen, living in comfortable quarters in attractive surroundings, working reasonable hours for fair pay, were actually becoming hideously contented with their lot!

More than twenty years ago a group of discontented French rebels left the bed and board of old-line Socialism, armed itself with a self-made divorce decree and started a deep red revolutionary *ménage* of its own. The old-line Socialists believed in the efficacy of the ballot box; if they could gain control of parliament overwhelmingly, they hoped to decree the socializing of industry by law, thus accomplishing the overthrow of capitalism peaceably. The secessionists—they called themselves Syndicalists—sneered at the ballot box, maintained that political action was too slow, too cumbersome and too ineffective for *real* results, abandoned the voting booth and placed their entire faith in Direct Action.

Direct Action is a euphonious synonym for kicking the boss where he lives—in the pocketbook. According to the philosophy of the Syndicalists, a condition of endless warfare exists between employer and employed. Since war recognizes no law, the workman is bound to obey none. So long as the act is directed against the employer, he can commit no crime—unless he is found out. Since all laws are held to be made by and for the employer, the Syndicalist denies their validity, nor will he enter into any agreements with employers or be bound by any contracts. Strikes with them are the normal condition; the periods of work represent merely the necessary truce in which to prepare for the greater fight.

The Syndicalists introduced the word *sabotage* into a dozen languages. They borrowed the term from the silk weavers of Lyons who, as they went out on strike, hurled their wooden shoes —*sabots*—into the delicate machinery of the looms. Sabotage came to mean any act through which the worker could inflict pecuniary damage upon the employer. Books were written and circulated, telling the discontented Syndicalist how to ruin bearings by filling them with emery dust, how to spoil boilers by charging their water with washing powder, how to commit a thousand depredations that would cause loss to the boss without endangering the malefactor.

Nor did they look with reverence and compassion upon their brethren in the trade unions. On the contrary, they proceeded to attack them almost as bitterly as they had hit at the capitalists. The Syndicalists declared that the trade-unionist was merely a small-potato capitalist in disguise, fully as anxious and willing to defend his job monopoly against all comers, fully as willing to cut his fellow-workers' throat as the capitalist. They maintained that a system which enabled the employer to play one craft against the other in the same shop, which caused the engineers to stay at work when the trainmen went out, was all wrong, and they proceeded to supplant it with their own system: One Big Union. According to their ideas all the workers in a given industry should belong to a single union international in its scope, and these industrial unions in turn should respond to one central body. Upon the appointed day, at the dawn of the Social Revolution, every worker in all the industrial world would join in the final General Strike and, presto! the porterhouse millennium would be there, full blown, the era of stew and beans for the workers would vanish in a twinkling. Against the folded arms of the world's workers all the bayonets and machine guns of capital would be helpless, argues the I. W. W.

That is the theory, the philosophy underlying the activities of the international revolutionary organization agitating in the United States as the I. W. W. It is anti-nationalistic, anti-patriotic, anti-militaristic to the core; it recognizes no law; it declines to hamper its freedom of action by agreements or contracts; as in Butte, it strikes first and makes its demands afterward. Unlike many craft unions, it never "closes its charter." It does not charge five, ten, fifty or a hundred dollars' initiation fee. A dollar gives any worker admission to its ranks, and it draws no line of color, race or sex. Its organization is as elastic as the Constitution and it is as hard to eradicate as the boll weevil. And its greatest, deepest strength lies in the fact that it extends the red hand of fellowship to the lowliest of the workers, that it has made itself the special champion of those who are paid the least and work the longest and the hardest, that it has taken up the cudgels for the "wops" and the "bohunks," for the masses of the ignorant immigrants neglected by the authorities, despised even by their aristocratic native fellow-workers, abandoned by all to the mercy of the greediest among employers, of the most brutal among gang bosses.

I am not singing a panegyric of the I. W. W. I am merely endeavoring to analyze and lay bare the sources from which this organization of avowed rebels derives its immense strength, a power vast enough to shut down the country's greatest copper mines during a period when every pound of the metal was

urgently needed, to paralyze the lumber industry in three states and to spread terror in a hundred farming communities.

It is possible that German money has been used liberally to bring about the present activities of the organization, but it would be an imitation of the ostrich to attribute the full scope of I. W. W. actions to this source. The real I. W. W. does not mind being called a traitor or a slacker; he merely grins and acknowledges cheerfully his total lack of patriotism. He maintains that governments of all kinds, that wars of all kinds, are conducted solely for the benefit of the capitalists, and that he, a mere slave, has no interest in them except to make use of the most favorable opportunity, when the masters have fallen out, to grab for himself, for his fellow "slaves" in mill, mine, forest and field, all that he can possibly extract out of the necessities of the dominant class. This theory, this mode of action, is well exemplified in present events.

Some years ago many charges of dynamite—and of corruption—caused to blow into a thousand pieces one of the oldest and strongest of the Far Western labor unions, the Butte local of the Western Federation of Miners, an organization that had dominated the industrial and political situation of the famous camp for decades. The I. W. W. element supplied the dynamite, the fuse and applied the match. Following the demise of the Western Federation of Miners, Sam Gompers endeavored to gather the remnant of the organization into the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, chartered by the American Federation of Labor, but the Gompers organization did not stand the test. When the I. W. W. element on the spur of the moment organized a new union and called the miners out on strike, the Gompers organization cheered and marched bodily into the camp of the forces commanded by Wm. D. Haywood, generalissimo of the I. W. W. Similar desertions took place in Bisbee, Globe, Miami and Clifton, Arizona; in Jerome a strike of the copper miners had just been settled to the satisfaction, apparently, of the men when the I. W. W. leaders called upon the miners to strike in sympathy with their Bisbee fellow-workers. They struck, settlements and agreements notwithstanding. In Butte the blacksmiths, the machinists and other crafts twiddled their thumbs at Gompers and, disregarding their signed agreements, walked out on sympathetic strikes. Everywhere the I. W. W. demonstrated that they had the power to set at naught the ideal of patriotic duty and to guide the actions of the workers along the lines of crass and open self-interest.

Of course they enjoyed a perfect combination of circumstances. An actual labor shortage existed in every line of endeavor. Employers were more or less competing with one another. Tales

of fabulous profits, many of them true, were constantly recited, the workers' envy was aroused by constant comparison of their earnings with the profits of the capitalist. The high cost of living was exploited for all it was worth and more. No argument was left unpolished by nimble-tongued advocates of the Social Revolution, who, however, were careful to subordinate their ultimate aims to the necessities of the moment. It seems that the word went out from headquarters to lay off the rough blood-and-thunder stuff, to tone down the revolutionary arguments to play on the men's cupidity in order to arouse them to action. And the plan worked, is still working, just as it worked in Australia where the coal miners remained sullenly on strike even though the wheat ships and transports carrying supplies to the heroic fighters in Asia Minor and in France had to lie tied up at the docks. The sullen envy artfully aroused by a handful of skilled agitators sufficed to overpower the voice of duty and patriotism.

I have no ready-made solution for the problem presented by the growing power of the Industrial Workers of the World, but I do not believe, looking back into history, that machine guns and gibbets are an effective remedy. It has been tried too often to promise lasting results. Rather I am inclined to look for a partial solution of the problem in the conditions as they exist in San Francisco and environs.

Of the San Francisco field the secretary of the I. W. W. speaks with bitter contempt. He can't make any headway. They won't listen to him. They won't enthuse at all, at all over the idea of the One Big Union. The little red membership card, proudly designated their Liberty Bond by the I. W. W., finds few takers even though a night school has been established to drill the doctrine of the Grand Bust-up into obtuse heads.

The reason for the San Francisco workers' total lack of interest in the gospel of the I. W. W. is not far to seek. Through a judicious combination of economic, political and direct action, through the liberal attitude of the San Francisco employers, the trade unions gyrating around the Golden Gate have been able to obtain higher wages and shorter hours than those normally prevailing anywhere else on the Pacific Coast, and the coast as a whole pays the highest average wages in the world. In addition to most favorable wages and hours, the San Francisco unions have for years exerted the strongest pull on the reins that guide the steed of municipal administration. In other words, the unions have had their own sweet way in San Francisco, and they do not propose to share even the core of the apple with outside interlopers, be they Socialists or Industrial Workers. They are perfectly content to let well enough severely alone, and they resent—

with initiation fees of a hundred dollars, if necessary—the attempt of any outside hoof to get into the trough.

Vermin and the I. W. W. agitator do not survive on a clean, healthy body. In drawing this parallel I am not disparaging the fanatical adherent of the Big Bang; I merely wish to emphasize the fact that the multiplication of either indicates the presence of an unhealthy, unclean, diseased spot. Wherever men are well paid, work reasonable hours and are reasonably content, the I. W. W. propaganda can make small headway, but it takes root and blossoms almost overnight where working conditions are bad, hours long and wages low. The bloody riot among the Wheatland, California, hop pickers several years ago would not have happened if bad sanitary and working conditions had not created a smoldering resentment which could be fanned into red flame by the overjoyed agitators, nor would it have been possible to tie up a good two-thirds of the Far Western copper industry if the discontent of the well-paid miners had not been artfully aroused by the incessant reference to the millions flowing into the pockets of the stockholders.

Contrary perhaps to current opinion, I believe that the Industrial Workers of the World have in the past rendered the country great and useful services. Their strident yelps have succeeded in focussing public attention upon the deplorable condition of the itinerant worker. The marked improvement in the conditions surrounding the casual laborer employed in the construction camps, on the railroads, in the forests and mines of the Far West, an improvement noticed almost everywhere by the sociological student, is in large part traceable to the persistent agitation of this organization of raucous-voiced professional rebels. The trade unions lived alongside of the old conditions for many decades without casting more than a casual glance at the hoboes and blanket-stiffs. The trade unions did not care so long as their own nest was warm and soft. It remained for the I. W. W. to reach down and lighten the despised bohunk's burden.

But this service was not rendered willingly. Your dyed-in-the-wool I. W. W. has neither wings and a halo nor does he play the harp. With him any improvement in the *present* condition of the workers is an unwelcome by-product *because it delays and retards the advent of his dream child, the Social Revolution.* He hates the present order of things with every fiber of his warped being, but he cannot overthrow it unless he convert the mass of the workers to his cause, and he cannot convert them unless he proves to them the efficiency of the One Big Union by winning better conditions for them *right now.* And every time he wins better conditions for them *now,* every time he induces enlightened

public sentiment to clean up diseased spots on the industrial body, his own efforts push the attainment of his ultimate goal farther and farther into the future.

So he becomes bitter, filled with a sullen, venomous rage. Dimly realizing the futility of his efforts, so far as the Universal Crash is concerned, he begins to love trouble for trouble's sake. In the sub-basement of the industrial structure he burrows and mines and digs and scratches for the sheer joy of destruction. Physically or mentally he is no longer able to do an honest day's work for fair pay: he is useless for any purpose except to wield the bellows that blow oxygen into the glowing embers of discontent.

There are thousands of men of this type, most of them native born or from northern Europe, drifting restlessly back and forth across the country, their roving eyes seeking for places in which to stir up trouble. When circumstances are favorable they become the leaders of vast armies, only to see their ranks melt away again when conditions change, for the bulk of American labor is as yet unaffected by the I. W. W. poison. And the safest, surest remedy against infection is a concerted attempt at real social legislation, a nation-wide, sincere and sustained effort to reduce unemployment, to improve conditions for the lowest stratum of America's labor. If fresh air and sunlight is allowed to pour into the corners of the nation's industrial cellar, the I. W. W. fungus will disappear.

But such a national effort is slow and cumbersome, takes years and many millions. In the meantime the emergency caused by a few thousand professional I. W. W. agitators is upon us. What is to be done about it?

Self-defense is a natural law. The I. W. W. agitators are avowedly carrying on a continuous war against organized society. Under present circumstances the government would be justified in putting out a dragnet, in gathering five or ten thousand of the most active agitators and in interning them for the duration of the war. Such a measure tried successfully in Aberdeen, in San Diego, in Jerome, Arizona, would put a sudden end to most of the trouble during the great international crisis, but it will be only temporary. A permanent solution can be found only in a quickening and broadening of the efforts of all agencies engaged in the great work of cleaning out the foul corners of the nation's basement.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SQUARE DEAL PAYS

The mill was in a bad way. It could sell only a fraction of its output. The Pacific Coast, then still in long dresses, could not absorb all of the new mill's product, and competition with the Eastern mills in their home territory was impossible. Times were hard in the middle nineties and the stockholders of the new mill in the new town grew exceedingly weary of the everlasting assessments. They did not like the balance sheets. Each month showed an increase in the floating indebtedness and an increase in the deficit. They debated whether it would not be cheaper to shut down the plant entirely.

This debate worried Jim Horning. His bread and butter depended upon the decision. If the plant shut down, it did not need a bookkeeper, and even a first-class accountant had little chance of finding a new position during the black years when two-thirds of the country's railroads found themselves in the hands of a receiver. Jim Horning knew what it meant to be out of work. The bookkeeping position was his second job in America; before that he had kept the accounts in a Seattle hotel—for his room and board. But things were different now. He had a family to support. So he burned the midnight oil, entirely surrounded by sheets of white paper and rows of short, finely sharpened pencils.

He was working out a most audacious plan. Many a night he figured, checked and rechecked his estimates; many an hour he discussed the plan with his good wife. At last he was ready.

The plan made the directors gasp. James Horning, the quiet bookkeeper, proposed to take the plant off their hands and operate it on his own hook. All he wanted was time, an option on the stock and a modest salary. In return he promised to pay the entire floating indebtedness running into six figures, to pay off the entire bond issue and to pay for the stock out of the earnings of a plant that had returned nothing but Irish dividends. And he proposed to accomplish all this without asking the stockholders to put up another cent!

They laughed at first, but when they saw that the bookkeeper meant business, they considered the proposition seriously. And they accepted it. Why not? Things could not be worse. A miracle *might* happen. So Horning took over the white elephant and became general manager. That was more than twenty years ago.

He did it. He paid the huge floating indebtedness, every penny of it. He retired the bond issue. He bought the bulk of the stock, all out of the earnings of the mill. Nowadays he spends a great deal of time improving his stroke with the niblick, and an automobile no longer is anything to him except the speediest and most confortable mode of conveyance.

How did he do it? How did the modest bookkeeper owning nothing except the small savings from his monthly pay check manage to obtain possession of a big plant employing hundreds of men?

Ability, foresight, hard work, enterprise and the export market were some of the rungs of the ladder up which Horning climbed to success, but the foundation upon which the ladder rested was just plain honesty, the intense desire to give every one of his customers a square deal. The square deal became the corner-stone of Horning's business policy. Through it he obtained not only the friendship and good will of the trade, but he also applied it to the solution of that knottiest of all questions confronting the manufacturer, the labor problem.

From the beginning he made it a point to establish personal relations with as many of his employees as he could reach. To him the men working in the mill were not "hands," but human beings with prejudices, likes, dislikes, feelings and ambitions even as you and I. Realizing the importance of team work in production, he set out to gain the men's confidence and trust. It was a slow, laborious process, but the result was full worth the effort.

To begin with, Horning determined that low wages and discontent meant low output. Therefore he deliberately began paying the highest wages in the industry. He went farther. When living costs and profits increased, he did not wait for a committee to appear with shaking knees and a bold front, demanding a raise of twice the size the men hoped to get. Before demands were formulated, before discontent had crept through the mill gate, he voluntarily gave the pay of the workers a lift. And when things did not turn out right, when the market sagged and economy became necessary, he waited until his competitors had reduced wages before taking the same step. Always he was the first to raise and the last to cut his men's earnings.

Nor did he stop there. Like every similar mill in the country, the plant was running two shifts of twelve hours. He was the first to change, to introduce three shifts of eight hours, at the same time reducing the hours of common outside labor from ten to nine. And he paid his men the same wages for eight hours that he had been paying for twelve.

On top of paying the highest wages and the shortest hours Horning took a personal interest in the affairs of his men. He

advanced them money at nominal interest to build homes; he helped them in case of sickness; he encouraged social activities. And, realizing that the average man resents being bossed around, he consulted the workers whenever the working conditions were changed.

And on top of the highest wages, the shortest hours, he proceeded to pay his men a bonus on increased production. It was not the kind of bonus based on stop-watch records. Wages were not reduced, the daily stint was not lifted before the bonus was paid. Taking an average year's output as the basis, Horning offered a monthly premium for increased production to the skilled mechanics running the machines, without disturbing the established scale of wages.

A year later Horning overheard a conversation that proved to be worth many thousands of dollars to him. Standing in the black shadow of a vat he heard one repair man call to another, "Hey, Bill, what's your hurry?"

"Got a call from number one. Something wrong. They're yelling for me to come and fix it," replied Bill.

"Let 'em yell," urged the other one contemptuously. "What'n hell do you care? You ain't gettin' a bonus. Let them bonus guys wait till you're good and ready."

Bill. He stopped and leisurely lighted a pipe before he resumed his march to the machine room. In the shadow of the vat Horning was thinking hard.

As a result of his cogitation the bonus system was extended to the repair men. The moment they acquired a pecuniary interest in the output of the machines, they speeded up. There was no more stalling. On the contrary, they were so anxious to keep the machines running full speed that they were on the spot almost before the trouble happened. But Horning did not stop with the repair men. He enlarged the scope of the premium until every employee except outside day labor had a share in the bonus over and above the highest wages in the industry.

What was the result of Horning's labor policy?

Honestly, the results sounds like a fairy tale. If they were not fully authenticated by elaborate detailed tables I would hesitate to write them down.

When the plant was built more than twenty-five years ago its rated capacity was, say, 150 gross per day, but it did not reach this output until Horning had been carrying out his labor policy for more than a year. He has not increased the machine capacity since then; though increased and improved auxiliary machinery has been installed from time to time, the important part of the equipment is just as it was twenty years ago. Visiting manufacturers owning up-to-the-minute plants with ten or twenty

times the capacity are inclined to sniff at the "obsolete junk" and pity Horning—until they hear of the daily output and get an inkling of the costs per gross. When fragments of this information get under their skin, their noses come down and their hats come off.

As stated above, the plant was rated originally as having a capacity of 150 gross per day. The partial bonus system was introduced in 1901. In 1903 the output rose to 165 gross in twenty-four hours. In 1906 it had climbed to 196 gross. In 1908 the bonus system was extended to every employee except outside labor. In 1909 the output had increased from the original 150 to 210 gross; a year later it was 225 gross; in 1913 it reached 264 gross. In 1916 the ancient machinery, rated to produce 150, was actually turning out 370 gross a day.

Team work did it. Since the size of the bonus depended upon the output, since the output of this particular product depended upon the smooth, uninterrupted working of every department from the raw material to the finished article, the men in every department saw to it that the slackers, the loafers, the "go-slow boys," the misfits and the drones were eliminated speedily. The men themselves, not the boss, insisted upon efficiency in their fellow-workers. The men themselves saw to it that every cog in the big production machine did its duty. The men themselves kept their eyes open for leaks, for chances to improve the process, to save time. In ten years the time lost on the principal machines —they did not improve with increasing age—was cut down by fifty per cent. And after the voluntary change from the twelve-hour to the eight-hour shift, when the bonus money was cut into three instead of two parts, the men doubled their watchfulness, put forth such intelligent, enthusiastic efforts that both production and bonus rose to figures considered miraculous.

Though Horning's payroll has increased in size from year to year, though the individual employee's earnings have gone up and up, the output of the plant has increased even faster. Horning proved the efficacy of his labor policy. Both the boss and the men are eminently satisfied because both profited through the enlightened policy. A policy that can lift the earnings of labor from $3.25 for twelve hours in 1901 to $6.93 for eight hours in 1916, which can at the same time more than double the output and reduce the cost of this output twenty-four per cent per unit, such a policy surely is worth the close attention of every employer and every worker.

The strike had been long, bitter and bloody, so bloody that I visited the battlefield to investigate the causes of the strife in person. The president of the State Federation of Labor led the

strikers. With him I discussed the feud for hours. By-and-by the talk drifted to Horning's mill.

"Why is it that Horning's plant, located in a community as thoroughly organized as any city on the Pacific Coast, is not unionized from top to bottom?" I asked.

"Because they don't need a union in Horning's mill," answered the strike leader emphatically. "It wouldn't help them a bit. They don't need a union because they're getting a square deal all around."

Yea, verily, the first rosy flush of dawn is breaking on the dark horizon of the Labor Problem. Up and down the Pacific Coast employers are giving this problem more intelligent consideration, are studying it from all angles more intensely than ever before. They are learning fast, learning that human understanding of the laborer and the square deal constitute the only sensible, reasonable and profitable policy.

Only a few weeks ago I was discussing the labor problem with E. G. Judah, president of the Los Angeles Merchants' & Manufacturers' Association, the organization that has led the Los Angeles fight against labor unions for twenty years, the mention of whose name causes the back hair of the average union leader to rise and bristle.

"To keep Los Angeles free from union domination we must pay the same wages and work the same hours as the closed shops farther north," asserted Mr. Judah. "Most of our members are following this policy right now. This organization cannot afford and will not protect the employer who exploits his labor. Only by paying the highest possible wages and giving the best possible working conditions can we hope to maintain the open shop. The employer who is able and yet fails to raise wages to conform with the rising cost of living is playing directly into the hands of the union organizer. So far as this organization is concerned, he will receive neither sympathy nor support."

In San Francisco the leaders among the employers long ago discarded the exploded theory that long hours and low wages increase profits. An example of the attitude taken by the leaders in social thought was supplied when the teamsters' union some time ago demanded increased wages, basing its demand on the rising cost of living. The draymen's association denied the request that stationary rates and higher cost of all materials made it impossible further to increase expenses, whereupon the union prepared to strike.

In this emergency a committee of the draymen's association turned to the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce for sympathy and active assistance, knowing that this organization had taken a strong and determined stand against violence and lawlessness

in labor disputes. A conference with the Law and Order Committee of the civic body was arranged. After a thorough discussion of the situation President F. J. Koster asked:

"You say you have to pay a great deal more than formerly for horses, hay, grain and other supplies?"

"Twice as much," answered the draymen.

"And your harness, your wagons, your axle grease, everything costs more?"

The draymen nodded an emphatic assent.

"Are you feeding your horses less grain because grain costs more?"

Why, of course not! The animals had to be kept in good condition.

President Koster was silent for a moment.

"Then human labor is the only commodity for which you feel that you cannot pay an increased price," he continued. "Consider the problem from that standpoint, gentlemen. If it costs you more to keep your horses, it surely costs your teamsters more to feed and clothe themselves and their families. If you cannot do otherwise, raise your rates a reasonable amount and grant the demands of your men. They are entitled to it and this organization will support you if you are faced by the necessity of charging more for your services."

The teamsters did not strike. They received the increase.

These are not isolated instances. Throughout the Far West open-minded employers have realized that the square deal is a most profitable policy, that the best possible wages and the shortest possible hours make for greater efficiency and lower labor cost per unit. If these open-minded, far-sighted employers had full sway, eighty per cent of the bitterness, the hatred and suspicion could be eliminated from the relations between capital and labor. But as yet neither labor nor capital is one hundred per cent perfect. The efforts of the thoughtful employer who is imbued with the spirit of the square deal are hampered and offset in every direction by the black sheep among his own class, men who have no conception of the problem facing the world, who still believe that human labor is a commodity like pig iron or sole leather, to be bought as cheaply and used up as cheaply as possible. Sometimes their exploitation is based on deliberate greed and ignorance; more often ruthless competition, lack of sufficient capital, inexperience and poor management force them to cut wages to the quick, but whatever the underlying cause, employers of this stamp do the cause of the square deal incalculable harm. They keep the unscrupulous labor leader and radical agitator supplied with ammunition.

Fortunately the slave-driving, sweatshop type of employer has never infested the Pacific Coast in large numbers; the sins committed by capital against labor have usually been the product of ignorance, of inefficiency or unsound financing and management. Even this class of offenders is very, very small today. When the laborers ceased to compete for the job and employers began to compete for labor, the general level of wages for skilled and unskilled men in every important industry rose to unheard of heights. If Simon Legree were to come out of his grave and assume charge of a factory, even he would have to pay high wages, work his men short hours and grant them the best possible conditions. Circumstances have given the workers, especially the skilled men, far higher compensation than the union leaders had ever expected or promised to obtain.

Wouldn't it seem to you, Friend Reader, that the union men and union leaders would make use of this marvelous opportunity to fortify their position? They are having everything their own way now. For the time being they are the cock of the walk, the ruler of the roost. But it won't be always thus. The inevitable readjustment after peace is declared will restore the old conditions. Doesn't it seem reasonable to suppose that union leaders and union men with real ability and constructive thought would make use of the opportunity to prove to the employer that he can make more money by running his plant as a union than as a non-union shop?

How can the union men supply this proof?

By turning out more work of a higher grade than non-union men. Every union claims that in its ranks may be found the cream of the country's mechanics superior in every respect to the non-members. Now is the time to back up this claim with evidence, to *prove* that it pays to give union men the preference.

Willingly or unwillingly, the employers of the Pacific Coast are now living up to the policy of the square deal. Are the unions in return doing *their* bit? Are *they* imbued with the spirit of the square deal?

Petroleum is short. In California production is a million barrels a month behind consumption. Destroyers, battleships, airplanes, army trucks are calling for ever more oil. A few weeks ago the federal mediator recommended the eight-hour day for the oil-field workers. Late in December two drilling crews, on night shift, were discovered tight asleep two hours after they had reported for duty. A third crew, all on the same lease, was playing pinochle instead of drilling wells. The men were receiving six to eight dollars a day; even the roustabouts were earning four dollars.

Go out among the managers, the superintendents and shop owners of the Pacific Coast. Ask them. They will tell you that

production, the extraordinary wages notwithstanding, is below normal. They will tell you that restriction of output is being practiced tacitly; they will prove that the multiplicity of galling, arbitrary union rules, designed to keep as many union men as possible employed for the longest possible time on any given piece of work, are being enforced rigidly, war or no war.

Does this policy pay in the long run?

A few of the national labor leaders are realizing the full extent of the possibilities inherent in the present abnormal situation. They are striving with might and main to bring about the burial of the tomahawk between the unions and the employers. In this national emergency they want the unions to make good.

But the labor leaders of the Pacific Coast, especially in the metal trades, are blind, deaf and dumb. Their mental vision is limited to the fact that they have the employers where they want them, *sans culottes*, and they are going to do to them what the Kaiser did to Belgium.

Will they ever realize, as Horning did, as the mass of the employers is beginning to appreciate, that the square deal is the only policy that will yield permanent dividends for both sides?

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